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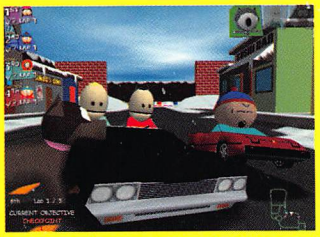
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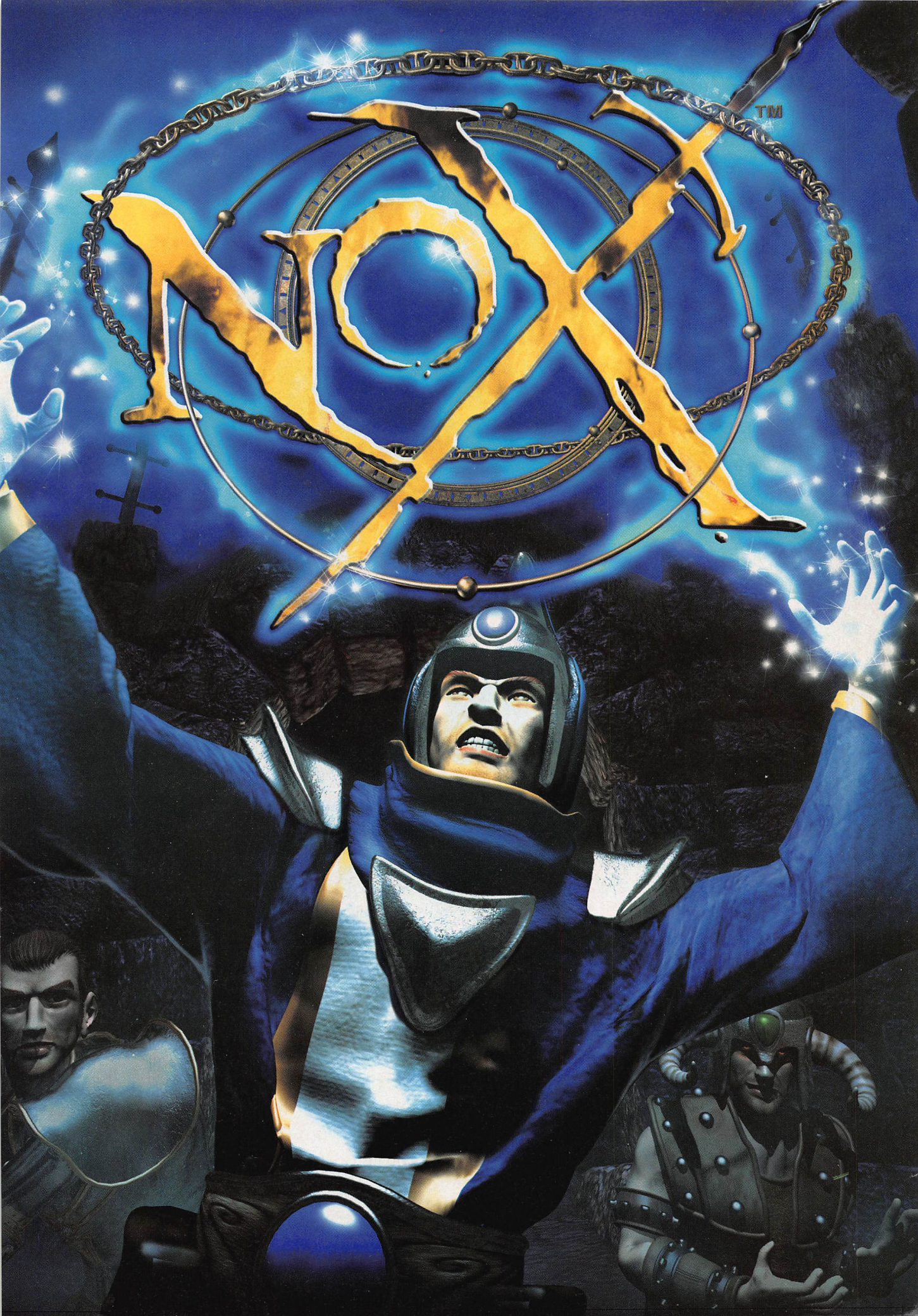
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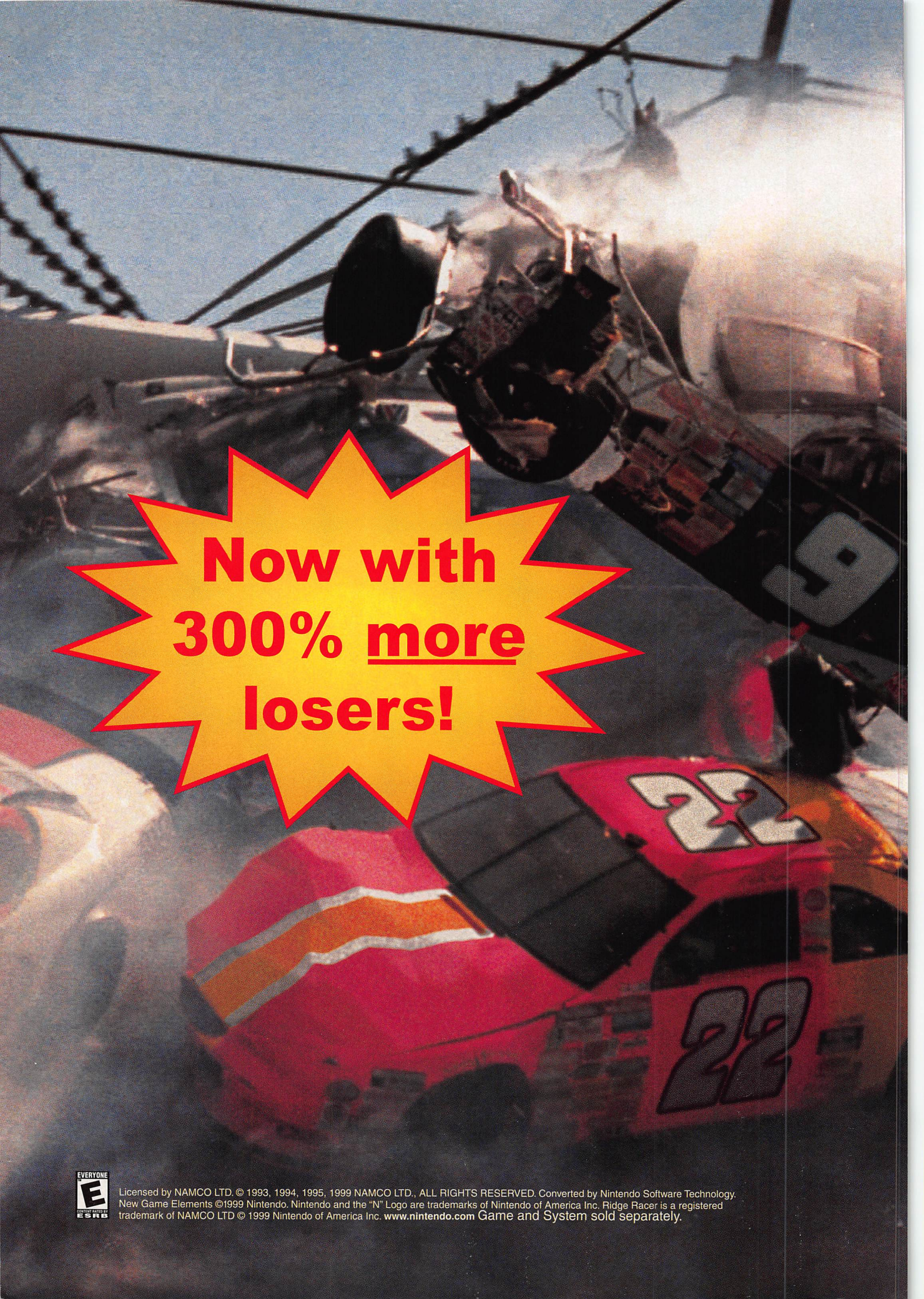
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Gamers' Republic Manifesto

Happy new century, everyone! You hold in your hands our first "double issue," which kicks off our trek into the transition year ahead. We thought this would be a great opportunity to give you two things we think you want and know you deserve: a thicker *Gamers' Republic* at a lower price. We've also rearranged our sections by console and beefed up here and there, a trend that will continue as the year goes on. We can't thank you enough for picking us up.

From here, once again, it's out with the old, and in with the new as the PlayStation and Nintendo 64 prepare to take their last curtain call. With two new power consoles on the not-so-distant horizon, not to mention the Game Boy Advance and perhaps a new box from Microsoft, the chances of any major new Nintendo 64 or PlayStation projects getting underway after the first quarter seem unlikely. Rather, most companies will likely polish off their works in progress and head for Dreamcast country until the PS2 and Dolphin explode onto the scene. So this year could belong to Sega if they (and their third parties) can get enough games out the door. There's certainly no shortage of imports awaiting extradition, and just off the top of my head I can think of at least a dozen exceptional games well down the development highway: Phantasy Star Online, Eternal Arcadia, Castlevania Resurrection, Shenmue, MDK 2, Rayman 2, Berserk, Messiah, Furfighters, Floigan Bros., Ecco, Sega GT, Code Veronica, D2, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, and Maken X are all just ahead. If Sega has ever had clear sailing (well, there's a chance of fog and some light drizzle) the time is now. A year from now it will be a whole other story. The PlayStation 2 and perhaps Dolphin will both be taking up residence in households across the U.S.—online-gaming ready right out of the box. So by 2001 we'll be at ground zero of a full-blown console war with at least three machines fighting for supremacy, not to mention the ever-burgeoning PC market and the X Box, should it materialize. The difference between this war and those of the past is that much of it will likely be fought in cyberspace. So hold onto your hats, everyone—beyond 2000 we're in for some serious entertainment. For now we're going to enjoy the tail end of two legendary 32- and 64-bit consoles while we celebrate the continued growth of the first 128-bit machine and wait for the online games to begin to flow. By the way, our top-secret (until now) cover compilation—Arc Collection—will be the perfect way to cap off the PlayStation's reign as the all-time greatest RPG platform to date.

MARCH 2000

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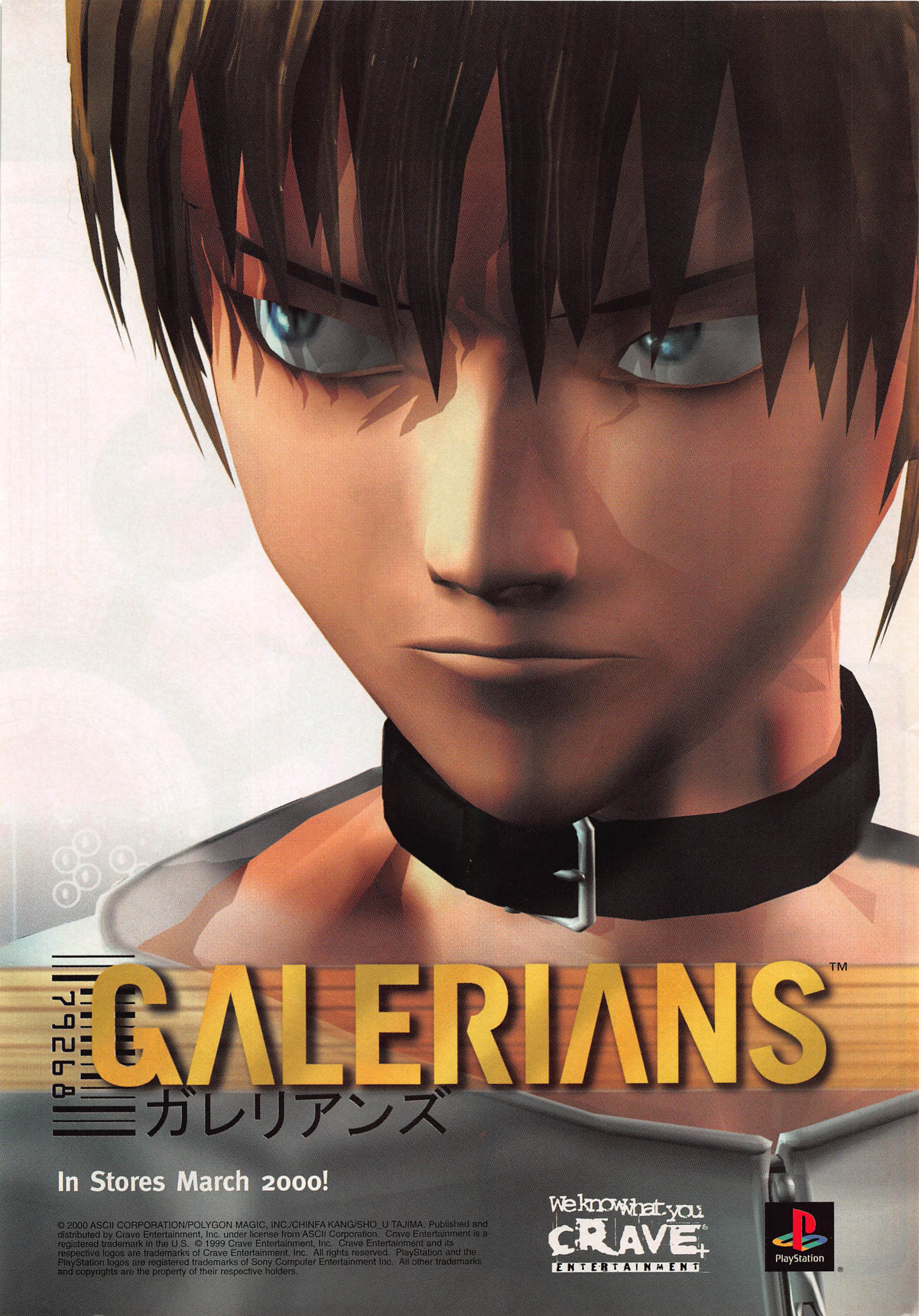
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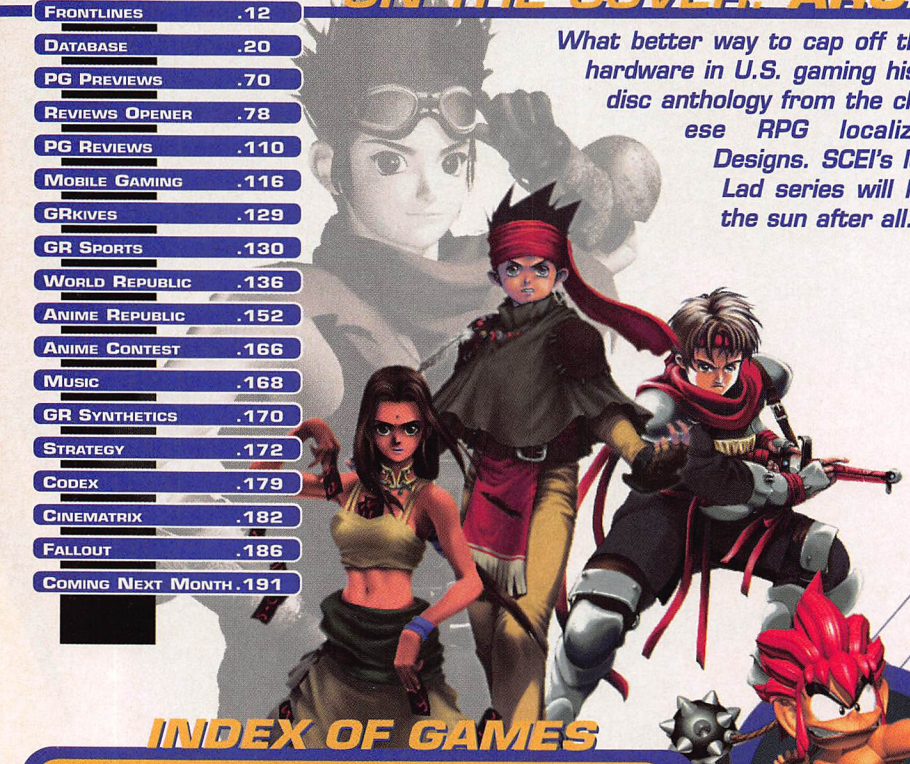
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ON THE COVER: ARC COLLECTION .28

What better way to cap off the greatest role-playing hardware in U.S. gaming history than with a six-disc anthology from the champions of Japanese RPG localization, Working Designs. SCEI's long-lost Arc the Lad series will have its day in the sun after all.











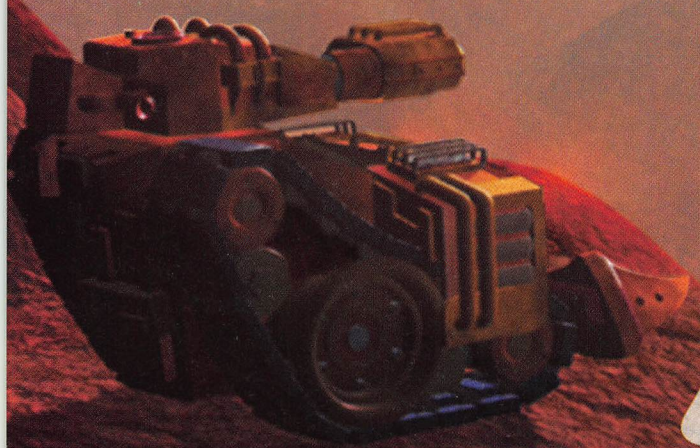


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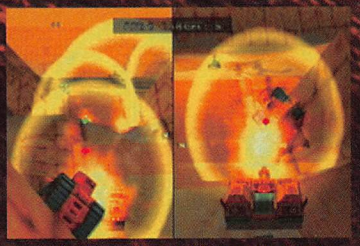
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"98%"
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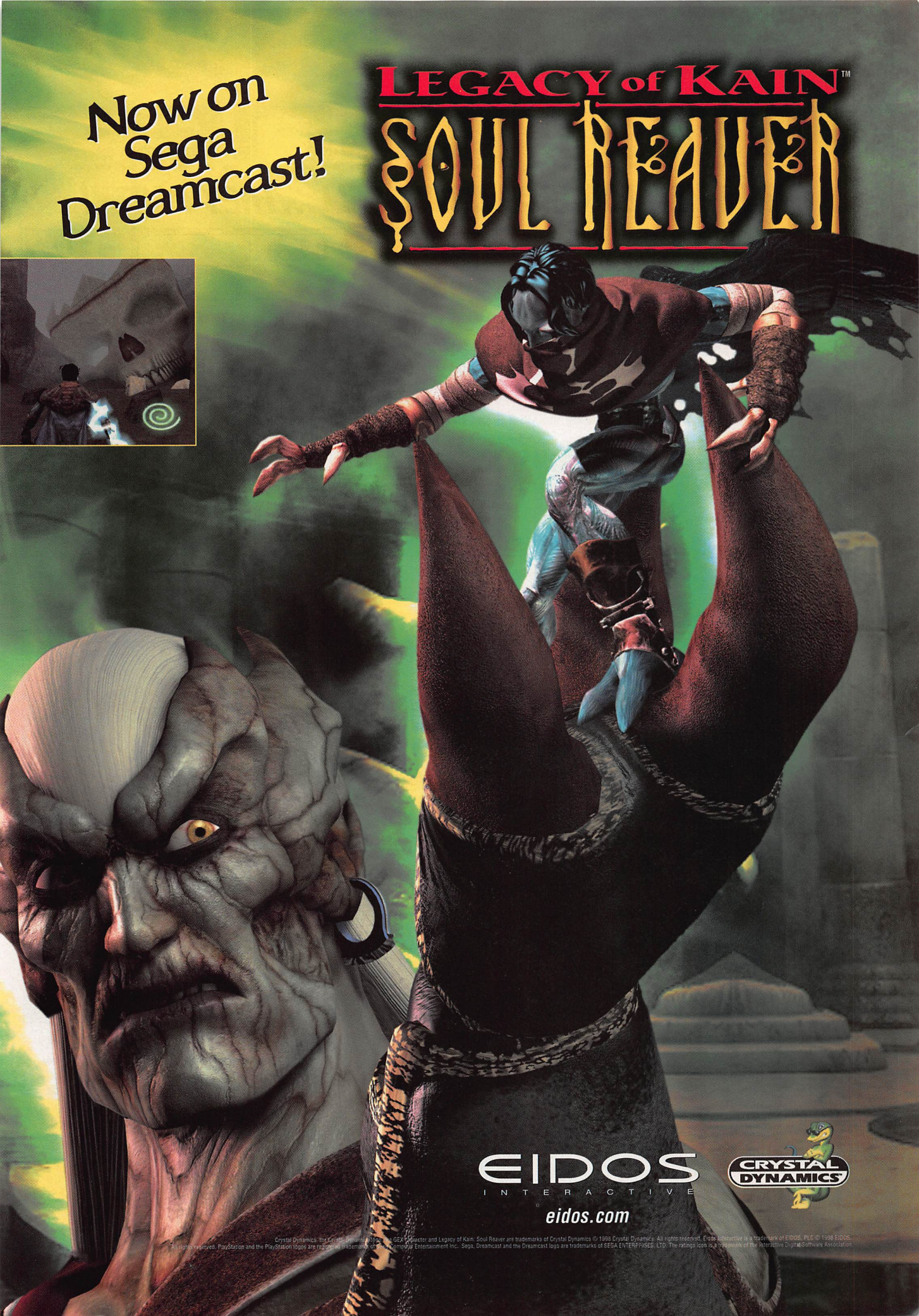
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frontlines

THESE BILLBOARDS DON'T SELL...THEY PARTY!

During the first full week of December, Gamers' Republic was at the scene of the 1999 Billboard Music Awards, thanks to Fox Sports Interactive. The event marked the 10th year Fox Broadcasting has hosted the Billboard awards and was the last music awards show of the millennium.

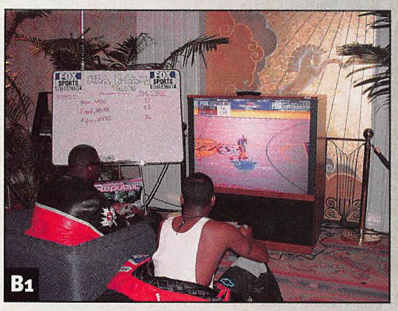
So why would we be there, other than to get a chance to get really close to Mariah Carey? Fox Sports Interactive held a tournament for all of the talent scheduled to appear to win a chance for their face to be digitized in their NBA Basketball 2001 title, slated for fall of next year, and Gamers' Republic was invited for an exclusive chance to cover the action.

Things got started on Dec. 6 inside the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino. The day was a bit slow; everyone was getting ready for awards day. Stage B located near the arena was sanctuary for all of the talent to relax and eat. As one entered, he or she passed a sea of coordinators, agents and publicists until coming to a great lounge area. It was here Fox Sports Interactive had several kiosks and a large-screen TV running their 1999 sports titles, NBA Basketball 2000 and NHL Championship 2000. DJs from across the nation were preparing their counters in the remote room and many rushed to finish, so that they could get a quick video game fix.

It became apparent that the next few days would be some of the most fun and memorable this reporter would ever be included on. Later that night, we were guests at a Sprite dinner at the House of Blues Foundation Room. (Did I mention I love Sprite and drink it often?) There we enjoyed good food and stirring conversation, and later took to the town to see just how much the city had to offer, which was way too much for this guy.

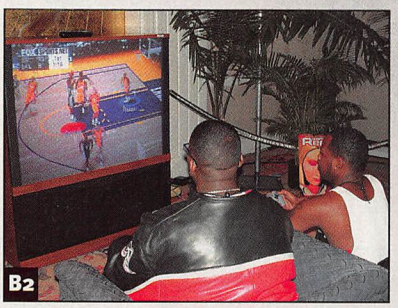
The next morning things really picked up. A lot of the artists started to roll through. Some came through solo—Common, Tiny Lister, Coolio, Rappin' 4-Tay, Tigger, host of Rap City, Lit and Carrot Top—while others like the Cash Money clique traveled in a group of about 12 deep. Juvenile, Lil' Wayne and The Hot Boys led the way. There was so much precious metal and stones in that partic-

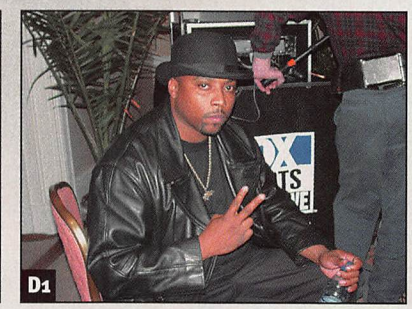

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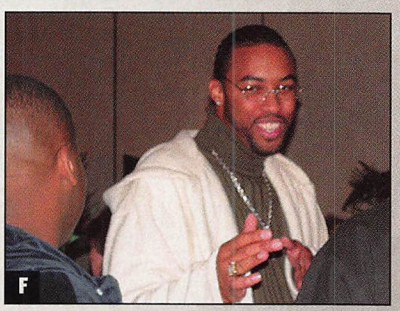

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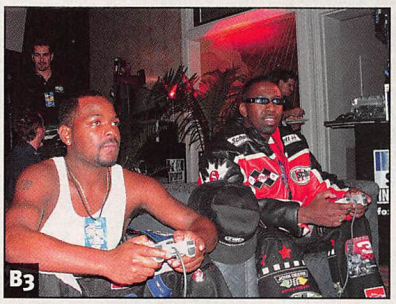

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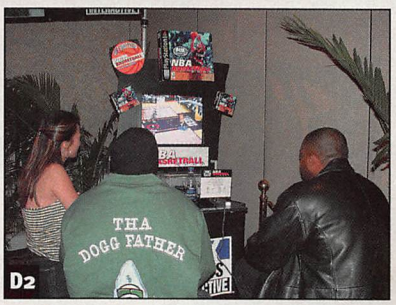

E1


B2


D1


F


B3


D2

(A) Gatecrashing.com sets up their webcast coverage of the tournament. (B) Members from Amyth get a quick game out of the way before they run through the remote room. (C) Is that Jennifer Lopez or Karen from Fox Sports Interactive? (D) Nate Dogg took advantage of some gaming in between radio spots. (E) Hip-hop artist Common showed up to take a break from all the hoopla. (F) Montell before the match with Snoop.

ular circle, they could have opened a jewelry store.

Later that day, The Dogg House Crew represented, also coming about 12 strong. Snoop, Nate Dogg, Xzibit, and Tha Eastsidaz had the mad associates showin' weight. These boys were also carrying some precious cargo: more on that in our Snoop interview.

Brian McNight also made an appearance, as did Amyth, Montell Jordan, Sole', Rafael Saadiq, Miss Universe, Miss Teen USA, actor James Avery from the Fresh Prince of Bel Air, and actress Jennifer Love Hewitt. Once most were done providing radio shouts, they came through to check out or participate in the Fox tournament.

The big show stopper was when Montell Jordan and Snoop Dogg took to the big screen and went at it. Snoop is definitely a motivator, if not a trash talker – two essential ingredients needed when playing sports games. Right away, most had their money on him. Montell was very low-key, though, and seemed like he might have something under his sleeve.

At the end of the game Snoop iced Montell, leaving him with a 20-point deficit. No one's sure if he lost because Snoop had a dozen of his Doggs lurking behind him, but my objective opinion is that Snoop knew what he was doing. After only a few minutes of observing Snoop it was obvious he plays video games.

That night Fox held a pre-party at the House of Blues where JT Money, Snoop Dogg and Lit preformed. Mike Tyson was even on stage, presenting and handing out a few awards. So, of course, we enjoyed more drinks, some dancing and more good company.

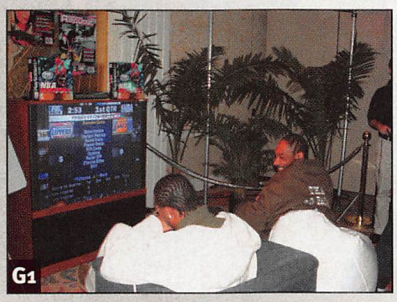
When the activities came to an end, we skirted to yet another branch of the House of Blues where we were invited to a Snoop Dogg/Eastsidaz record release party. Oh man...it was easy to get in trouble there. After consuming about four more Hurricanes, we started to mingle and circle around Snoop and the Doggs as they danced and sang tracks from Tha Eastsidaz' new album.

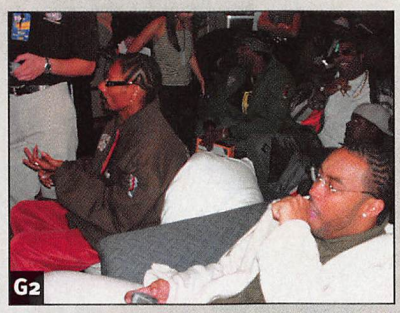
The next morning, the day of the awards, started slow. Well...at least for myself. Once I got some food to soak up the alcohol poisoning my body I perked right up, though. Arriving downstairs, in the lounge I ran into The Goodie Mob, Outkast, Eve and the Ruff Ryders, Kurupt and IMx.

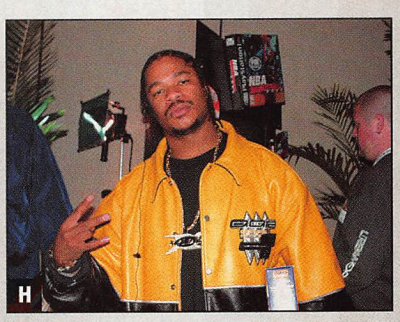
I didn't get the chance to see the tournament wind down, because yours truly was invited to have a talk about games with none other than Snoop Dogg up in his hotel suite. So while Karen from Fox and myself went to chill with Snoop, the folks from Fox—Angela, Steve and Ivo—held the closing events and supplied me with the vital information.

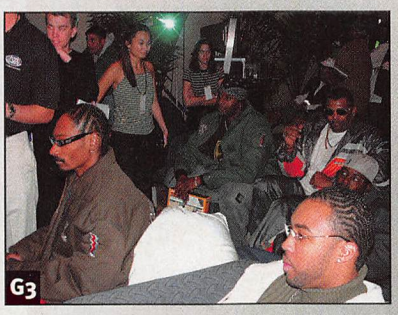
In the end, Eddie Owens, WPEG Urban Radio DJ from Charlotte, North Carolina, took the prize. (FINAL SCORE: Charlotte 49 points at the half). On top of getting his likeness implemented in NBA Basketball 2000, Eddie won a package that includes a PS with a complete library of Fox Sports Interactive and Fox Interactive games, as well as round-trip airfare back to Las Vegas from Charlotte for three nights at the MGM, VIP access to Studio 54, dinner at the Brown Derby restaurant and a pampered day at the MGM Grand Spa – not too bad at all. More coverage can be found at www.gamersrepublic.com, www.fox.com, and www.gatecrashing.com.

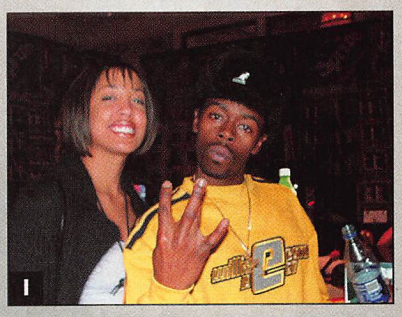
Much thanks to Angela, Karen, Steve and Ivo at Fox Sports Interactive for a momentous event and nondeviating attitude and support. GR

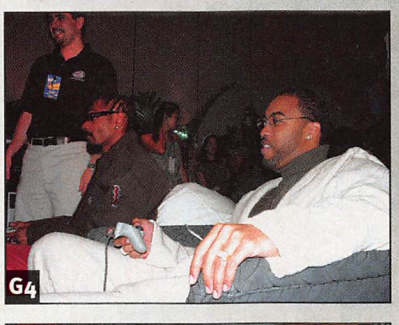

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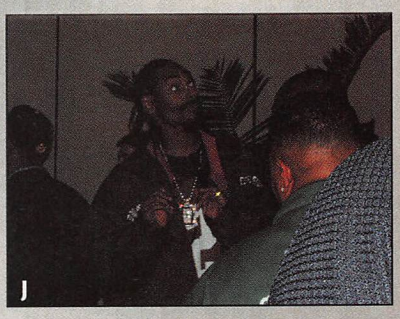

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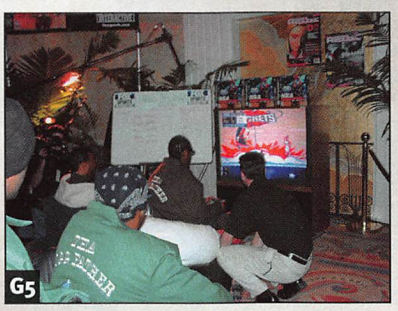

H


G3


I


G4


J


G5

(G) The highlight of the tournament, Snoop takes Montell to da' bricks. (H) Xzibit pauses for a quick shot before turning his attention back to the game. (I) Oakland rapper Rappin' 4-tay spoke with us, as he represented the town. (J) Snoop after the match with Montell.

Sega Dreamcast
IT'S THINKING

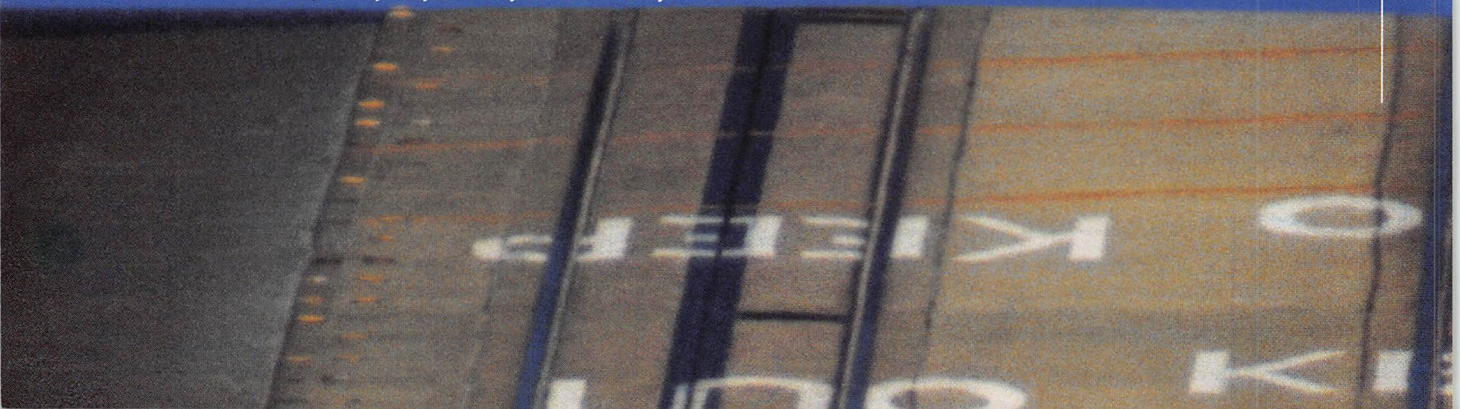
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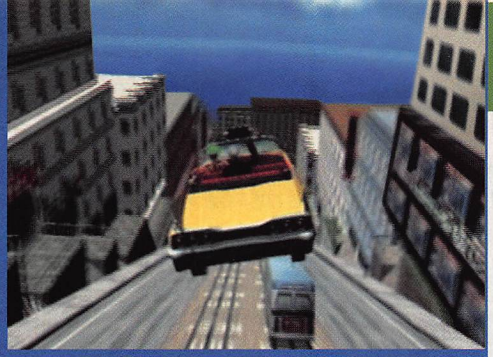
I
am
sure
we did
get a bit
of air at the
top. Could be
that I punched
it a little too hard.
But my passenger,
Holy Joe the preacher
wigged out, man. Starts
shouting and cussing like
a teamster with Tourette's.
Anyway, we land, and there's
this damn cable car coming, so
I jump that, and then we're in the
other lane with oncoming traffic, so
trying to be responsible, I go up on the
sidewalk. But only for three or four blocks, and everyone got out
of my way, even that bag lady. Next thing I know we're sitting in
the frickin' bay. Maybe it's my brakes... crazytaxi .com

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RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

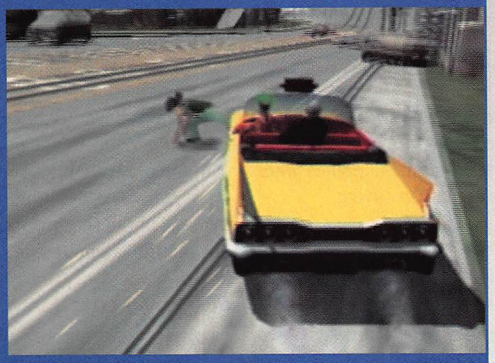


u're too lazy to
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recycled paper that
is game no justice
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at crazytaxi.com











WICKED GAMING

The city of Chicago has come under fire recently, thanks to video games. A group calling themselves the Christian Peacemakers marched on City Hall to protest an alleged $2-million grant Chicago gave to the maker of the gory video game Mortal Kombat.

You may now be asking yourself why Chicago would be handing over a pile of cash to Midway Games, and, hey, that's what we asked as well. The answer is, Mayor Daley and the rest of the Chicago City Council decided Midway was a valuable resource to the business community. The company threatened to pull up stakes and move out to the West Coast; Chicago fetched up a fat incentive check to keep Midway.

As a result, a peace-loving group of Mennonites, Quakers, Methodists, Roman Catholics and members of the Church of the Brethren want Mayor Daley to cancel said grant. According to the protesters, Mortal Kombat includes characters who partake in many "offensive actions," including dismemberment.

A spokeswoman for the city's planning department, meanwhile, insists the City Council approved the grant to allow Midway to expand its operations in Chicago, thus saving over 700 jobs. Neither Midway nor the city, however, would comment on the actual dollar amount of the grant.

INDUSTRY TIDBITS

• In a move not expected to come this early, and possibly a foreboding, domino-effect sign of things to come for the Big N, Acclaim Entertainment announced that they are ceasing game development for N64 to focus efforts on more profitable business models. Sources at the company stated that Acclaim still has N64 titles scheduled for release this year, but will not continue development on any new titles.

• GR spoke with a source at Bandai America in regards to information about a possible full-color-screen WonderSwan. The source confirmed that the unit is in the works in Japan, but that there is no set release date there or in the U.S., nor is there confirmation of any software titles in development. Titles rumored in development for the color portable are: Super Robot Wars, SD Gundam and Square-developed RPGs.

• Great news for Neo Pocket owners! There are two games that Neo Geo fans everywhere have been dying for: Nam 75 and Magician Lord, the infamous wartime shooter that squealed those immortal gaming words "you will die," and one of the lordliest 2D arcade games of all time. Well, great news. One has been confirmed: Magician Lord. No screens were available at press time but the game is expected to hit around the March/April time frame. Nam can't be far behind... "Do I have to go back to that hell again?"



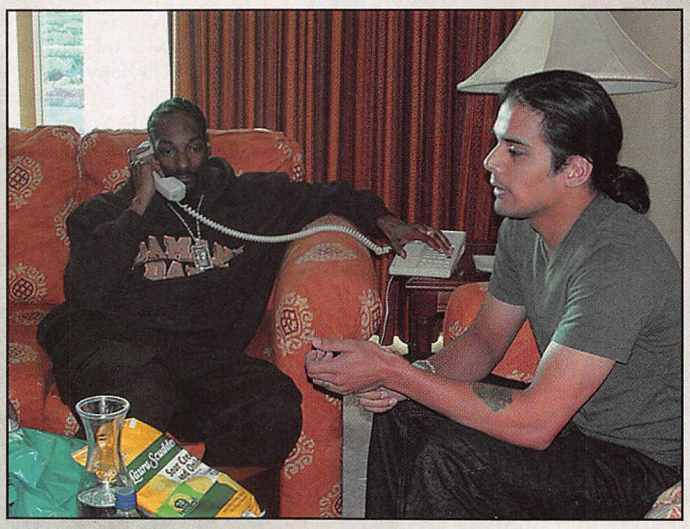
• Oops: Last month, we erroneously credited Crave as the publisher of Soul Fighter. The game is published by Mindscape.

gamers' republic monthly gaming news
MAR 3/00

PARENTAL ADVISORY EXPLICIT CONTENT

A WALK IN THE CLOUDS WITH SNOOP DOGG

On Dec. 8, the day of the Billboard Music Awards, we spent the afternoon with Snoop Dogg up in his hotel suite. First I should start by saying when this happened I felt completely out-of-body and somewhat awkward walking with him and the Dogg House crew. Once we got to his suite, everybody started to relax and once everybody got situated they put in his upcoming album to be released in July called The Last Supper. Eventually I felt more at ease and was there having a good time for so long that I forgot that I was going to interview him. I managed, though. Snoop is a really cool guy and obviously values video games.



GR: So how long have you been into video games?

Snoop Dogg: As a kid, you know, once video games hit the market and when they came through to the ghetto, we didn't always have the accessibility to gettin' them, so whenever they came through the hood, you know, it was exciting. From the Atari, to Colecovision, Intellivision, all the way up to right now with the Dreamcast.

GR: As you've grown up, have video games been a consistent staple of life for you? A lot of times, hobbies tend to get boring because nothing presents itself to keep you interested.

Snoop Dogg: I think it became more a part of my life when the games became more believable. Like with Tecmo Bowl and stuff like that where you could choose and play as your favorite teams and just get more involved. All my homies were doin' it, so I did too. It was a good way to pass time.

GR: I know that in some of your lyrics you make references to video games.

Snoop Dogg: Mmm hmm...

GR: So then do the games you play influence what you might write and rap about?

Snoop Dogg: Yea...because the games that I play represent me. Whether it's football, basketball, you know, soccer, it got to be something that I can relate to and really enjoy. Tennis, you know, something that I can get involved in and me and the homies can get down and play.

GR: Sitting here I noticed you have a PlayStation and Dreamcast set up. Is that something you take on the road regularly?

Snoop Dogg: Yea, yea. I gotta' have it in my life everywhere I go. Me and my homies are always playing.

GR: Shit...sorry, I lost focus there for a second.

Snoop Dogg: [Grinning.]

GR: Yesterday you and Montell Jordan sat down with Fox's basketball game.

Snoop Dogg: I kick ass and call names wherever I go. You know what I'm saying.

GR: (Laughing)

Snoop Dogg: Ya'll had the chance to have your cameras there. It was the first time I sat down with the game and kicked his ass by more than twenty. So, you know I'm the baddest. And the shit I know how to play...shit. I'm banned from a lot of shit.

GR: That's respect. Since you play games so much, are there any opinions you have about games that fall short in areas, that you wish you could change?

Snoop Dogg: Madden 2000 is weak to me. Quarterback Club 2000 is wacked too. That shit doesn't let you complete any passes.

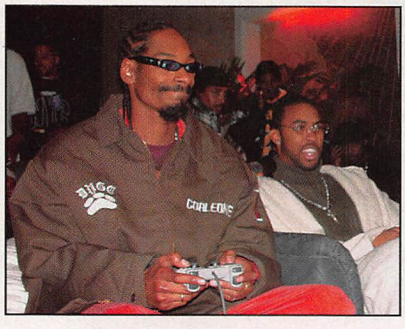
GR: What do you think about the Dreamcast sports games?

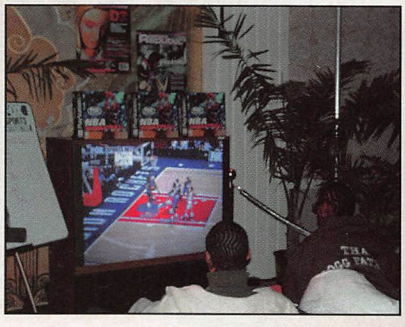
Snoop Dogg: That football game is tight! NFL2K on the Dreamcast is the f____' shit. And that NBA2K is the best basketball game ever made. Those guys are f____' it up. They got the hottest shit, you know what I'm saying. I can't even front on that. If Quarterback Club can fix the passing, though, it will be up there too, but right now Dreamcast has the dopest shit.

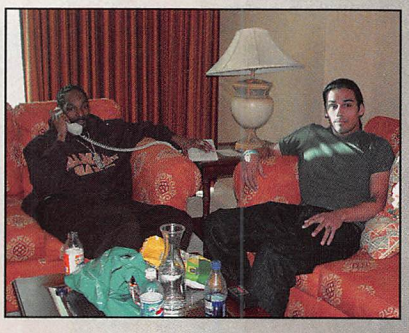
GR: When you guys tear the games up, is it usually toe-to-toe or in teams?

Snoop Dogg: Mostly one-on-one. Everybody likes to lose by they selves. Meaning that, if we're playing and you're on my team and we lose, I'm liable to cut you the f___ up, 'cause you're the reason why I lost. I'd rather lose on my own. But we have done the team tournament thing and it's cool like that. You need to take a certain amount of responsibility out there. Instead of doing what you want to do, you might have to block or set a screen. Sometimes you might not even be involved with the play other than hiking the ball. And a lot of people be ego-trippin, 'cause they want to do all of the scoring or anything that has to do with the glamour side.

GR: I hear that...







GR: Man...I'm sorry; I lost focus again.
Snoop Dogg: Aww...it's all gravy.

GR: So what about adventure games like Resident Evil? Do you like those types of games?
Snoop Dogg: I really don't have time to get involved with them type of games. I'm more into the sports games. Usually there are eight or nine of us wanting to play and we set up tournaments. So those games, fightin' games and shit like that really aren't set up for that. You know what I'm saying, where you can really compete against each other and winner take all. That's what we be into.

At this point one of the members of Tha Eastsidaz came through the room to rekindle the conversation.

GR: Who's sitting top shelf right now?
Snoop Dogg: I'm number one around the world right now—they know that. You know what I'm saying, not just with the Dogg House, but everywhere I go.

Eastsidaz: Cut it out, nephew.

Snoop Dogg: You cut it out. Before I go over there and plug that motherf____ up! You know about me...Shit, I'll beat a n____' with one hand.

Eastsidaz/GR: [Laughing]

GR: Being at the Billboard Awards and seeing the presence of video games, do you think...
Snoop Dogg: They are definitely colliding. What you have to understand is that the music industry is a part of everything now. Computers are the biggest thing in the world, and what's next to it? Music. You put the two together and you bring it to new realms. So it's just a matter of getting the right combination together. But still, they really haven't found that big hit bringing the two together. So that's why people are trying to get with me, to create that. Now Madden 2000...

GR: On the PlayStation?
Snoop Dogg: ...Yea. They had Jermaine Dupri do that shit. That one's bangin'.

GR: If you were approached to give your ideas on a game, what would it be?
Snoop Dogg: Me, personally... I would make a game where I would be a human character that could change into a dog character and I would be fighting other human characters that would change into dogs too. That way you could get into straight, head-up dog-fights. The human character would ride through different neighborhoods as a human, low-ridin', shootin', drinkin' beers, whatever, just real shit. It's only a f____' video game. They will make Resident Evil and turn it into a movie or vice versa. So I would like to do the same thing with real-life situations that go on around me. Just a deep, edgy virtual world, where people can turn into dogs and scrap to add the fantasy part of a video game. There's a lot to the shit I want to do and I've thought through the whole f____' thing. If it gets done, this shit will be tight.

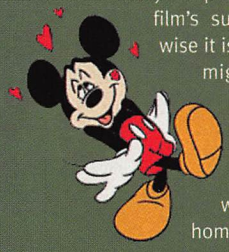
GR: Man, you are definitely heavily involved with video games. A lot of people base today's games on experiences they had back when they had Atari and don't realize the growth.
Snoop Dogg: Shit...and if you haven't seen the growth you haven't been paying attention.

GR: Thanks for this time and having us up here.
Snoop Dogg: Thanks man. I appreciate y'all. Thanks for hanging out.

MICKEY & LARA: TLA?

Eidos Interactive announced that it has joined forces with Disney Interactive for three video games to appear on console and handheld systems, all based on Disney licenses. The games will be created by Eidos' internal Crystal Dynamics studio.

The first game announced is Walt Disney World Racing, which will debut this spring for the PlayStation, Game Boy Color, and Dreamcast. Later a title based on the upcoming movie *102 Dalmatians* will be published for the PlayStation, Dreamcast, and Game Boy Color. The third title has not been confirmed, but there is speculation that it will be based on Disney's big summer 2000 release of *Dinosaurs*. This obviously depends on the film's success. Otherwise it is possible we might see another *Toy Story 2* game to coincide with the film's home release.





Mickey Mouse © Disney

Lara Croft © Eidos

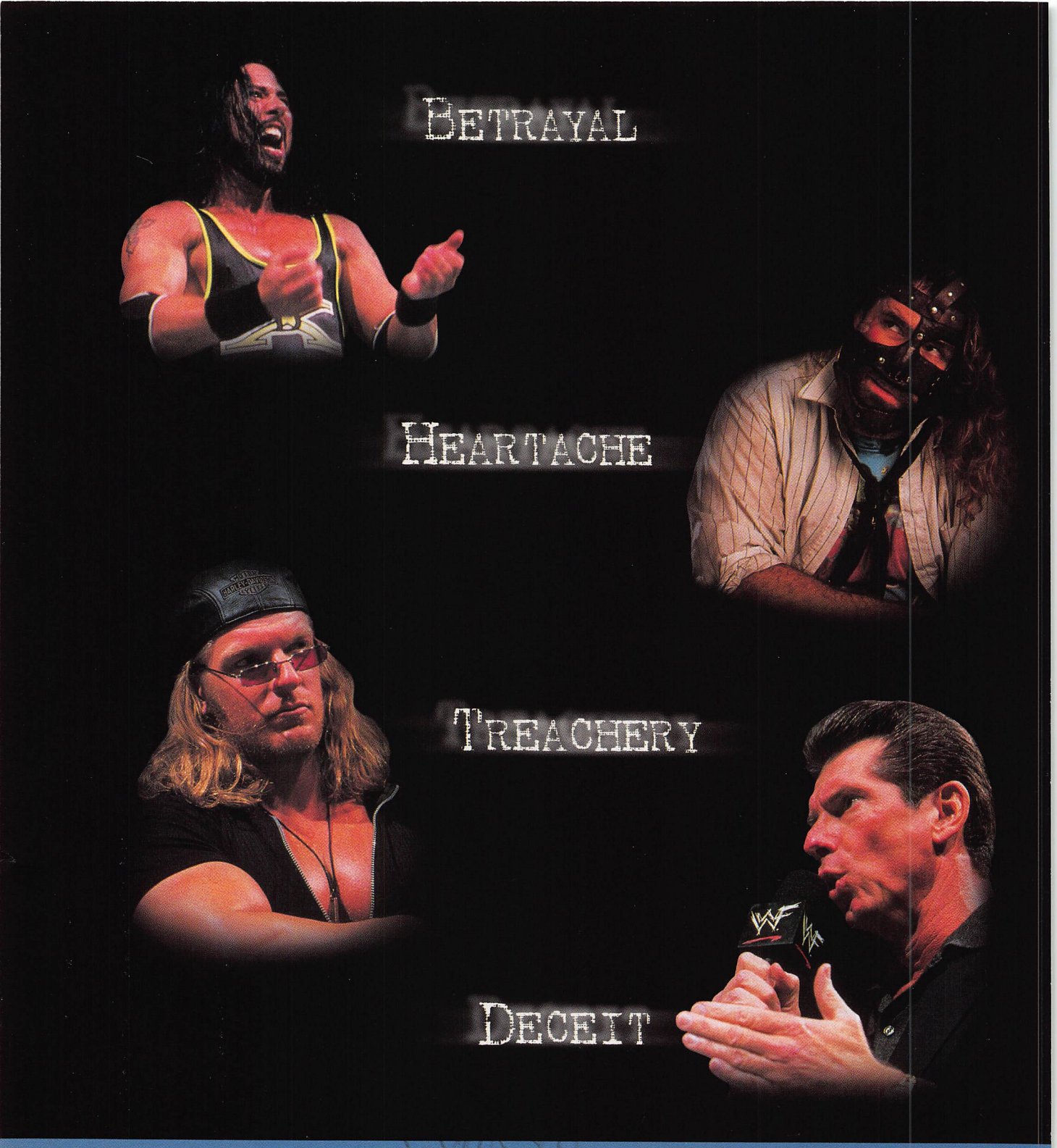
HIDDEN TREASURE!

Recently, the president of Treasure, Masato Maegawa, spoke with Japanese Dreamcast magazine Dengeki DC. During the conversation, Mr. Maegawa spoke of plans to release a collection of their 16-bit titles for the Dreamcast! Currently titled Treasure Box, the compilation is sure to be packed with nothing short of A titles. He did not go into specifics as to whether the games would be modernized in any way or if they would be straight ports. To anyone fond of games by Treasure (all hands here are raised), it won't matter.







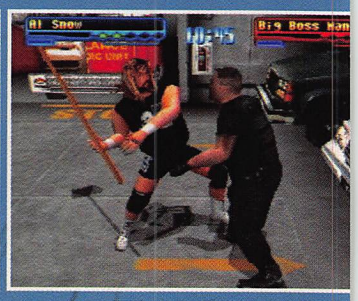


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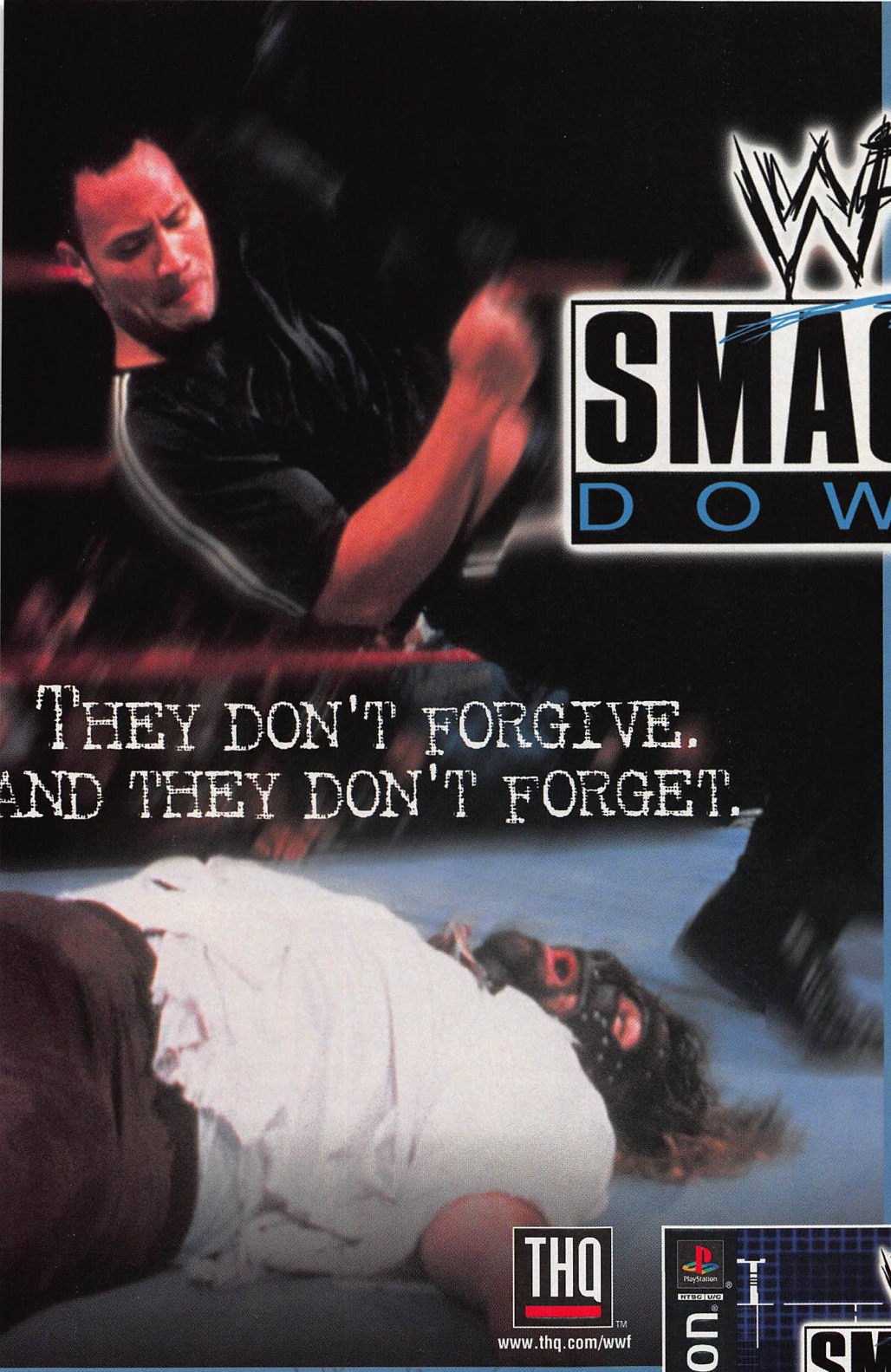
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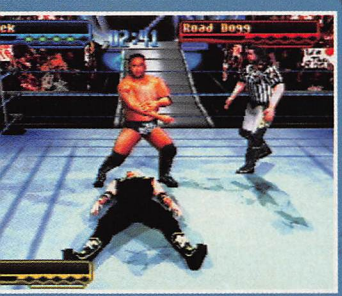
Make friends then break them as you roam backstage from the boiler room to the kitchen.

Call upon your allies for help and then climb over them as you kick, grapple, and People's Elbow your way to the top.

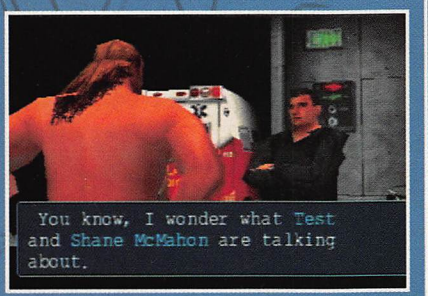
Just remember that backstage politics can work against you – don't let The Rock™ run-ins, well-placed metal chairs, and McMahon appointed guest referees get you in the end.

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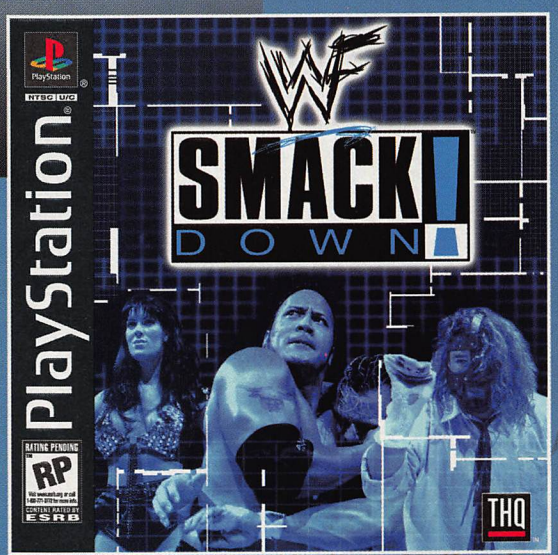
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top ten selling playstation titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 11 1999



1. TOMORROW NEVER DIES	EA	6. TOY STORY 2	ACTIVISION
2. NBA LIVE 2000	EA	7. SPYRO THE DRAGON	SONY
3. T. HAWK PRO SKATER	ACTIVISION	8. SPYRO 2 : Ripto's Rage	SONY
4. RESIDENT EVIL 3	CAPCOM	9. GRAN TURISMO	SONY
5. CRASH TEAM RACING	SONY	10. TOMB RAIDER 4	EIDOS

top ten selling nintendo 64 titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 11 1999

1. DONKEY KONG 64	NINTENDO	6. SUPER SMASH BROS.	NINTENDO
2. WWF WRESTLEMANIA 2K	NINTENDO	7. NFL BLITZ 2000	MIDWAY
3. POKÉMON SNAP	NINTENDO	8. T CLANCY'S RAINBOW 6	RED STORM
4. TOY STORY 2	ACTIVISION	9. GOLDENEYE 007	NINTENDO
5. NAMCO MUSEUM 64	NAMCO	10. ARMY MEN: Sarge's Heroes	3DO



top ten selling dreamcast titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 11 1999



1. NBA 2K	SEGA	6. SEGA RALLY 2	SEGA
2. NFL 2K	SEGA	7. WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM
3. SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	8. SEGA BASS FISHING	SEGA
4. READY 2 RUMBLE	MIDWAY	9. HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA
5. SOUL CALIBUR	NAMCO	10. NFL BLITZ 2000	MIDWAY

top ten selling pc titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD NOVEMBER 1999

1. POKÉMON STUDIO RED	C.W.	6. DEER HUNTER 3	WIZARDWORKS
2. POKÉMON STUDIO BLUE	C.W.	7. BARBIE GOTTA GROOVE	MATTEL
3. ROLLER COASTER TYCOON	HASBRO	8. HALF-LIFE	SIERRA
4. LEGO ISLAND	MINDSCAPE	9. BIG GAME HUNTER 3	HEADGAMES
5. AGE OF EMPIRES 2	MICROSOFT	10. R.C.T. : CORK	HASBRO



top ten overall console

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 11 1999



1. DONKEY KONG 64-N64	NINTENDO	6. TOMORROW NEVER DIES-PS	EA
2. POKÉMON RED-GBC	NINTENDO	7. POKÉMON SNAP-N64	NINTENDO
3. POKÉMON BLUE-GBC	NINTENDO	8. NBA LIVE 2000-PS	EA
4. POKÉMON PINBALL-GBC	NINTENDO	9. T HAWK PRO SKATER-PS	ACTIVISION
5. WWF WRESTLEMANIA 2K-N64	THQ	10. POKÉMON YELLOW-GBC	NINTENDO

world republic top ten games

japan

1. GRAN TURISMO 2 PS
2. PARASITE EVE 2 PS
3. POCKET MONSTER SILVER GB
4. POCKET MONSTER GOLD GB
5. MOMOTARU ELECTRIC RAILWAY 5 PS
6. DONKEY KONG 64 N64
7. CRASH BANDICOOT RACING PS
8. MARIO PARTY 2 N64
9. DEKOTORA LEGEND 2 PS
10. MUSCLAR LIST Vol. 1: I'm the Strongest Man PS

* FROM DEC 13 ~ DEC 19 1999

united kingdom

1. FIFA 2000 PC/PS
2. TOMORROW NEVER DIES PS
3. TOMB RAIDER 4 PC/PS
4. CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER PS
5. DRIVER PS
6. COLIN McRAE RALLY PC/PS
7. MEDAL OF HONOUR PS
8. GRAN TURISMO PS
9. POKÉMON BLUE GB
10. POKÉMON RED GB

*WEEK ENDING 1/1/00

gamers' republic top ten games

* BASED ON GAMES PLAYED THROUGH JANUARY 12 2000

d. halverson



1. RAYMAN: Great Escape DC
2. SHENMUE DC
3. BERSERK DC
4. MAKEN X DC
5. WILD METAL COUNTRY DC
6. CRAZY TAXI DC
7. E.G.G. DC
8. T HAWK PRO SKATER PS
9. TOMBA 2 PS
10. D2 DC

b. siechter



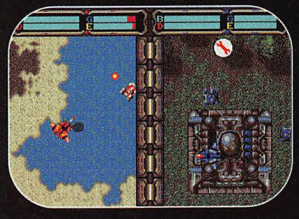
1. LEGACY OF KAIN: SR DC
2. CODE: VERONICA DC
3. RESIDENT EVIL 2 DC
4. J CHAN STUNTMASTER PS
5. E.G.G. DC
6. NBA 2K DC
7. MAKEN X DC
8. STREET FIGHTER III DC
9. WORMS: ARMAGDDN DC
10. ALUNDRA PS

m. hobbs



1. SHENMUE DC
2. GRAN TURISMO 2 PS
3. BERSERK DC
4. EVOLUTION 2 DC
5. F-1 World Grand Prix DC
6. VIRTUAL ON 2 DC
7. SPACE CHANNEL 5 DC
8. SF III DC
9. D2 DC
10. KIKAIOH DC

t. stratton



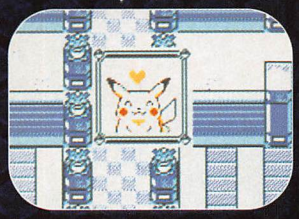
1. HERZOG ZWEI GENESIS
2. NBA 2K DC
3. T. HAWK PRO SKATER PS
4. GRAN TURISMO PS
5. WU-TANG: Shaolin Style PS
6. LANDSTALKER GENESIS
7. WRESTLEMANIA 2K PS
8. NFL 2K DC
9. BASS FISHING DC
10. EQUINOX SNES

pooch



1. DONKEY KONG 64 N64
2. WHEEL OF TIME PC
3. CRAZY TAXI ARCADE
4. SILENT SCOPE ARCADE
5. L.A. Machine Guns ARCADE
6. TIME CRISIS 2 ARCADE
7. POKÉMON BLUE GBC
8. JAMBO SAFARI ARCADE
9. PONG PS
10. JET FORCE GEMINI N64

e. sear



1. POKÉMON YELLOW GBC
2. GRAN TURISMO 2 PS
3. SPYRO 2 PS
4. METAL GEAR SOLID PS
5. SONIC POCKET ADV. NGPC
6. LEGACY OF KAIN: SR DC
7. T. HAWK PRO SKATER PS
8. RAYMAN GBC
9. CRAZY TAXI DC
10. SPACE CHANNEL 5 DC

j. r. haugen



1. RBI BASEBALL NES
2. POY POY PS
3. MICRO MACHINES V3 PS
4. WORLD CLS TRACK MT NES
5. CHU CHU ROCKET DC
6. SPACE CHANNEL 5 DC
7. ALUNDRA 2 PS
8. E.G.G. DC
9. DANCE DANCE REV. 2 rm PS
10. WORMS: ARMAGDDN DC

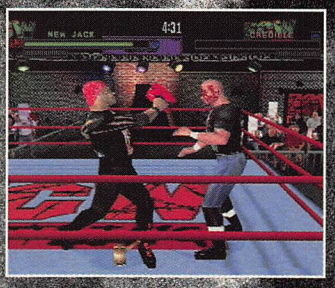
d. smith



1. VALKYRIE PROFILE PS
2. SHENMUE DC
3. CRAZY TAXI DC
4. DEAD OR ALIVE 2 ARCADE
5. DR. DUDE... ARCADE
6. BRIDE OF PIN-BOT ARCADE
7. GH WARRIOR SPR. PCE-CD
8. SNATCHER SEGA CD
9. COTTON BOOMERANG SS
10. XPILOT X WINDOWS

REAL F'N E







MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence
Strong Language

NINTENDO 64

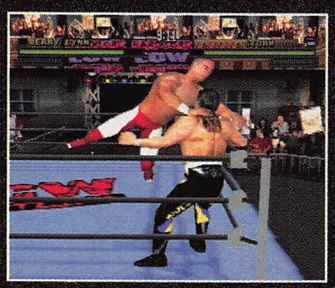
PlayStation

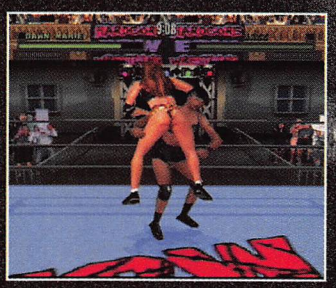
NO GAMERS UNDER 17
NO EXCEPTIONS

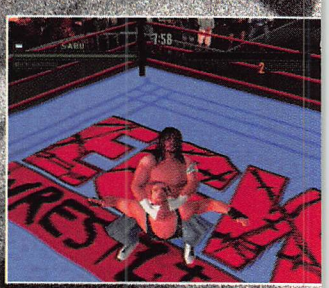
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MATURE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

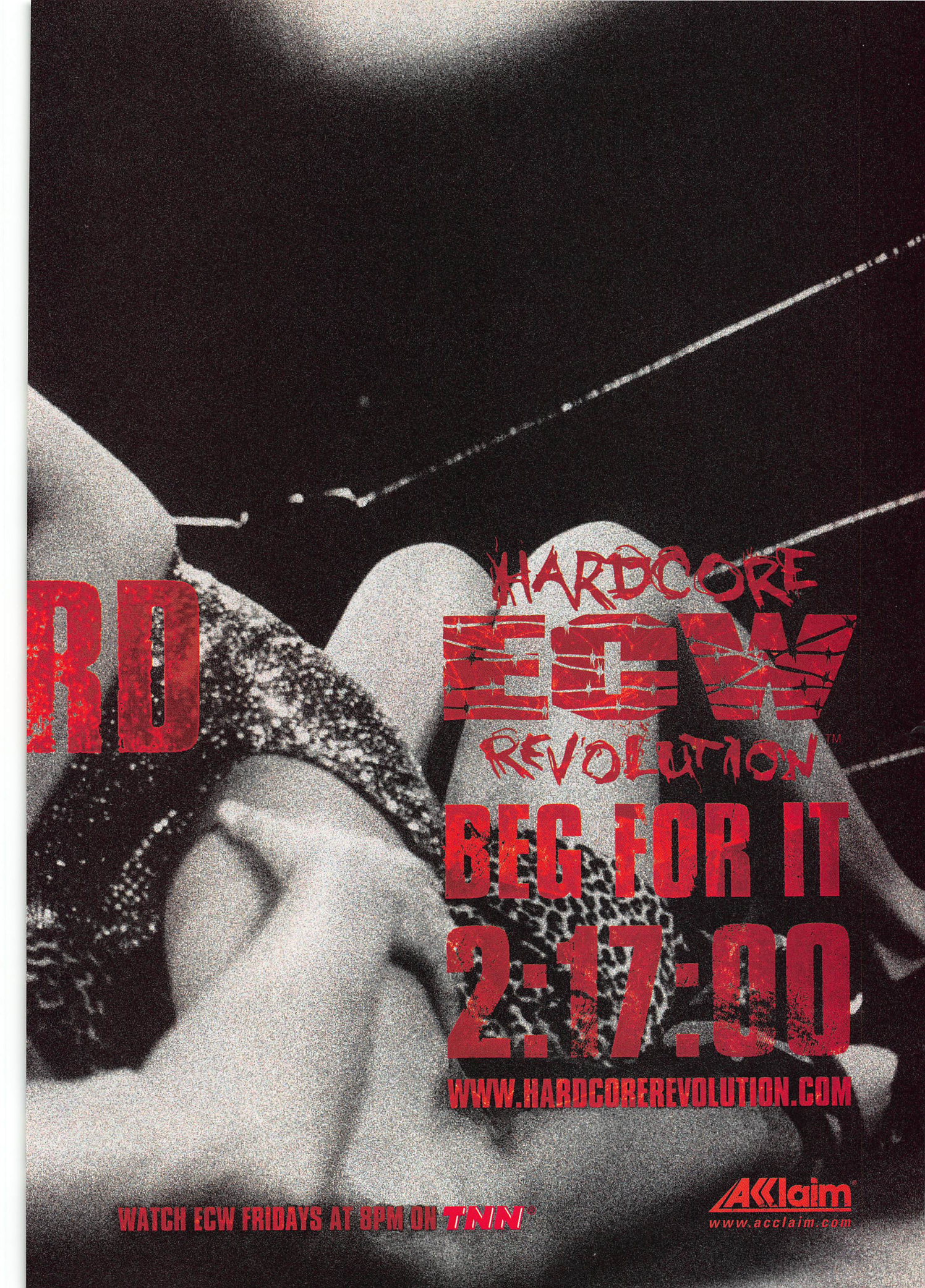
Animated Violence
Strong Language

NINTENDO 64

PlayStation

NO GAMERS UNDER 17
NO EXCEPTIONS

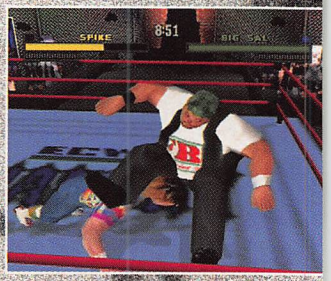
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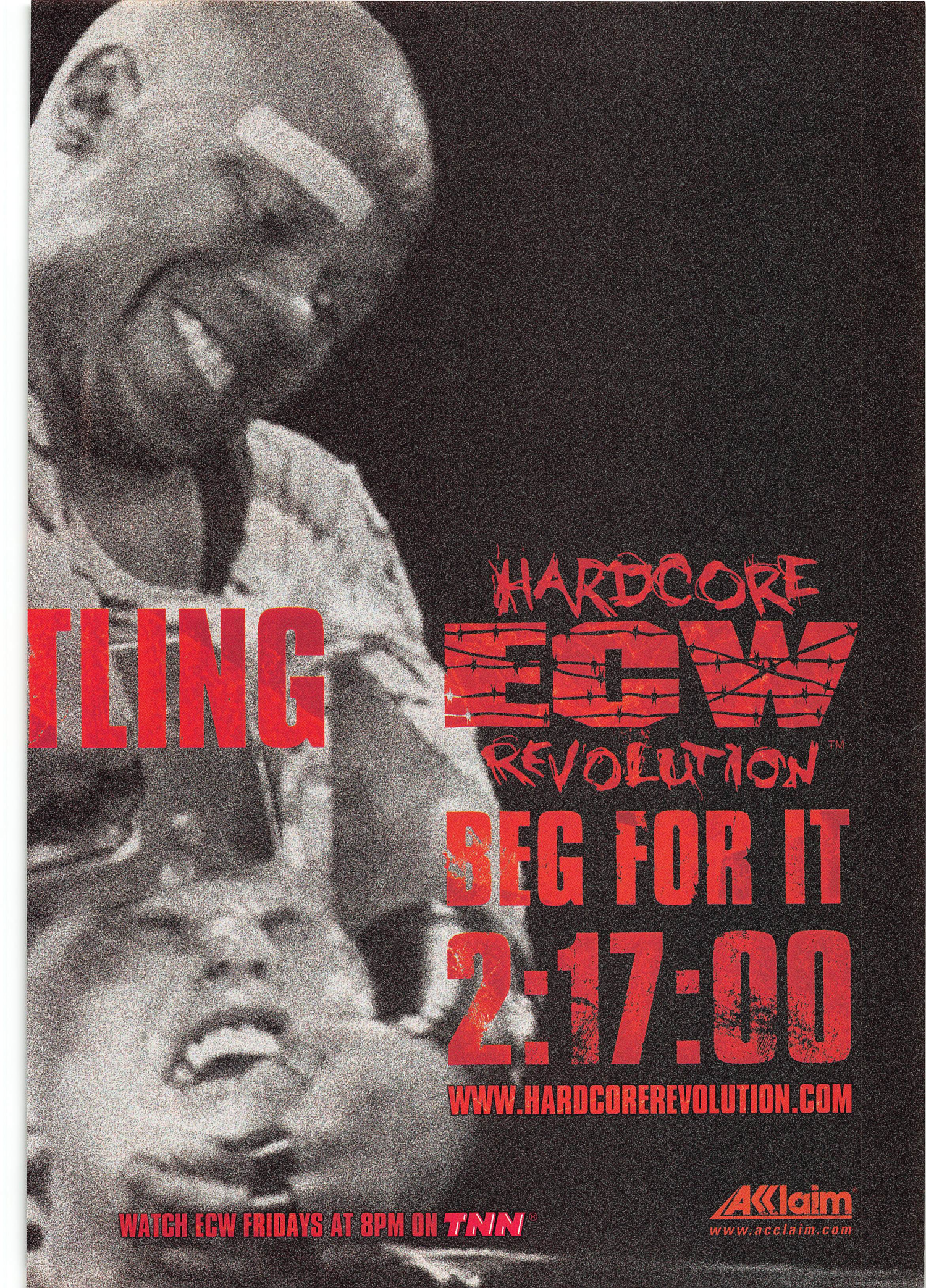
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NINTENDO 64

PlayStation

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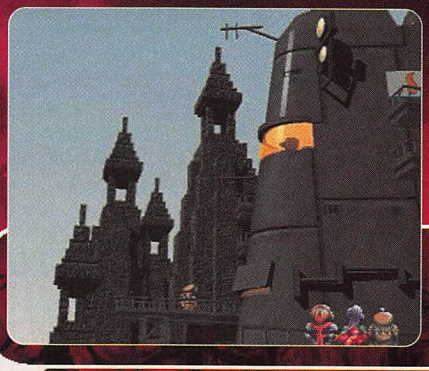
ARC COLLECTION

BY DAVE HALVERSON AND BRADY FIECHTER

One of the few RPG series that has yet to venture Stateside will finally find the complete audience it deserves

It wasn't that long ago when import RPGs being localized for the U.S. market were an extremely rare commodity. Most American third parties were very leery of the genre throughout the 16-bit era, for a multitude of reasons. The enthusiast fan base were very vocal about their wants and needs, but their cries fell on mostly deaf ears...mostly. Since the inception of 16-bit hardware, one company has always filled that niche, which has now grown tremendously. From Cosmic Fantasy on the Turbografx CD to Popfulmail and Lunar for the Sega CD, Working Designs pretty much championed the U.S. role-playing scene until the PlayStation came and finally opened the flood gates. The PlayStation has supplied by far the largest venue for role-playing games to date, a trend we hope lives on. Sony made the decision early on to support the genre, and select third parties followed suit with great success. Working Design's first PS role-playing venture, SCEI's Alundra, was not only a critical and retail success, but it was the first, and remains the only, quality hand-drawn top-down action/RPG for the system. WD followed suit with Lunar: Silver Star Story (and the finest packaging ever seen—one of their trademarks) has just shipped 2D justice for PS owners everywhere with Treasure's Silhouette Mirage, and will deliver Lunar 2 Eternal Blue (the follow-up to the much-celebrated Lunar) shortly. Next they'll release Vanguard Bandits and then cap off the greatest role-playing system with the largest role playing anthology ever—Arc Collection. They've also released two of the most incredible shooters out there, RayStorm and ThunderForce IV Perfect System, under their Spaz label.

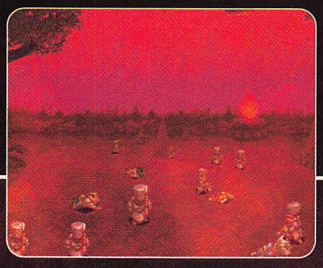
SCEI's Arc the Lad I, II, and III are the only highly regarded and revered role-playing games that never crossed the pond. But now they are about to in very high style.

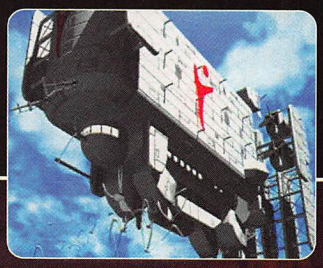




*Screens from chapter 1







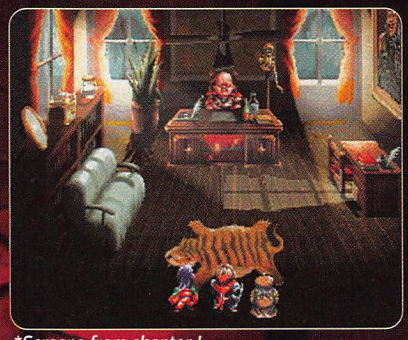


*Screens from chapter II

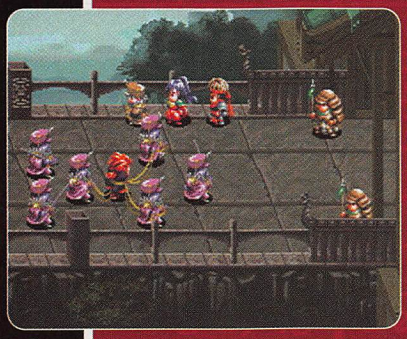
Arc Collection

Uncover the mysteries of the magical Ark, and bring peace to a fractured world.





*Screens from chapter I

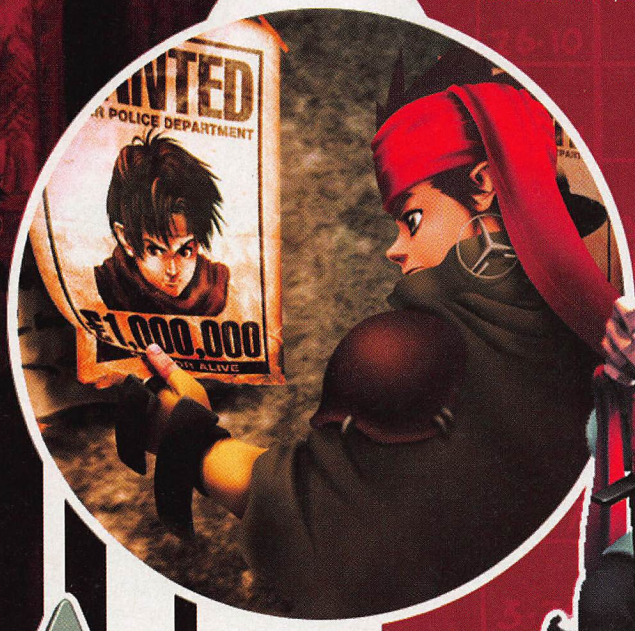




The first RPG to grace the PlayStation, Arc the Lad was hugely popular, outselling nearly every game released before it. Its greatest assets were the lovely hand-drawn backgrounds and beautifully scored music. When compared to the current crop of RPGs today, the gameplay may seem somewhat spare: there are no towns to explore, shops to buy items, no expansive world map to roam, and the quest was extremely short and linear. But taken as the whole of its many high points, Arc the Lad is a fantastic start to this grand trilogy of games.

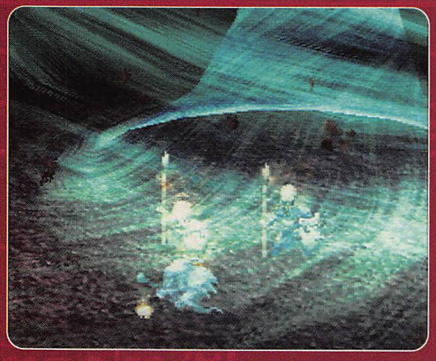
The Arc the Lad story begins with a precocious boy named Arc, who lives in an age in which a plague of darkness and despair looms over the world of Samaria. It is here where humans, spirits, and monsters exist, breeding calamity in their belligerent ways. According to a great legend, an artifact of the gods known as the Ark holds the key to saving Samaria. Arc is born as the hero, destined to join six companions and find five sacred stones that will break the seal of the Ark.

Arc the Lad can, in many ways, be considered an entertaining prologue to Arc the Lad II, a taste of the feast to come. As a true sequel, Arc the Lad II builds and improves upon every quality









As these shots from Arc III reveal, the series has come a long way in terms of special effects and character design.

Wonderful hand-drawn art and sprite-based characters work to great, traditional effect

that propelled the first game.

As the events in Arc the Lad conclude, Arc the Lad II picks up shortly after with a story that is much deeper and more involved. Arc and his loyal band of followers have made many enemies in their journey, and when a bounty hunter named Elc crosses their path, enmity turns to friendship. As a child, Elc was discovered to possess unimaginable powers, which lead to his abduction by a corrupt government and imprisonment in a research facility for experimentation. The implications of Elc's past will soon prove severe as Arc and his followers are drawn into a number of dire, twisting plots and subplots.

The adventure in Arc the Lad II unfolds in true RPG fashion as you make your way through several towns and labyrinthine dungeons, collecting items and buying weapons for your journey. The game is advanced through a job-based system, which sends you into different locations to perform various tasks. There is now an overworld to explore, and as many as 14 characters can join what is truly an epic quest.

In the random battles, five members of your party fight over chess-like grids, similar to your typical strategy/RPG like Tactics Ogre or Final Fantasy Tactics. For assistance in the battles, Liza, one of the main party members, can recruit across enemy lines; it's a great addition to the battle system. While the character attributes and elemental properties don't play host to the kind of depth found in the aforementioned titles, the conflicts are still quite involving and require a considerable amount of strategy.

The third in the Arc the Lad trilogy is in some ways a departure from the past games, in that the hand-drawn

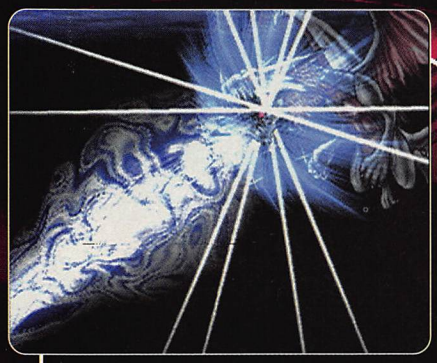


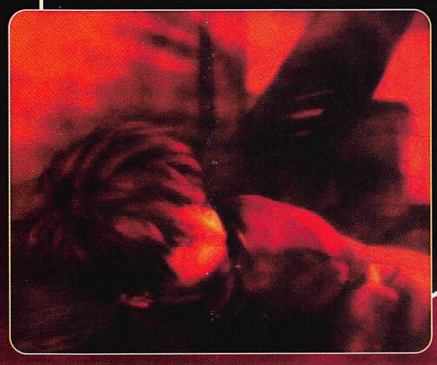


The strategy-forged fighting in Arc happens instantly, negating the annoying fade-in-and-out times associated with so many modern RPGs.



*Screens these pages chapter III





Where the original was a mere 15 hours or so long, Arc II and III are in the 30-50 hour range, depending on how thoroughly you explore the game.

The largest gaming anthology ever.
Over 100 hours of gameplay

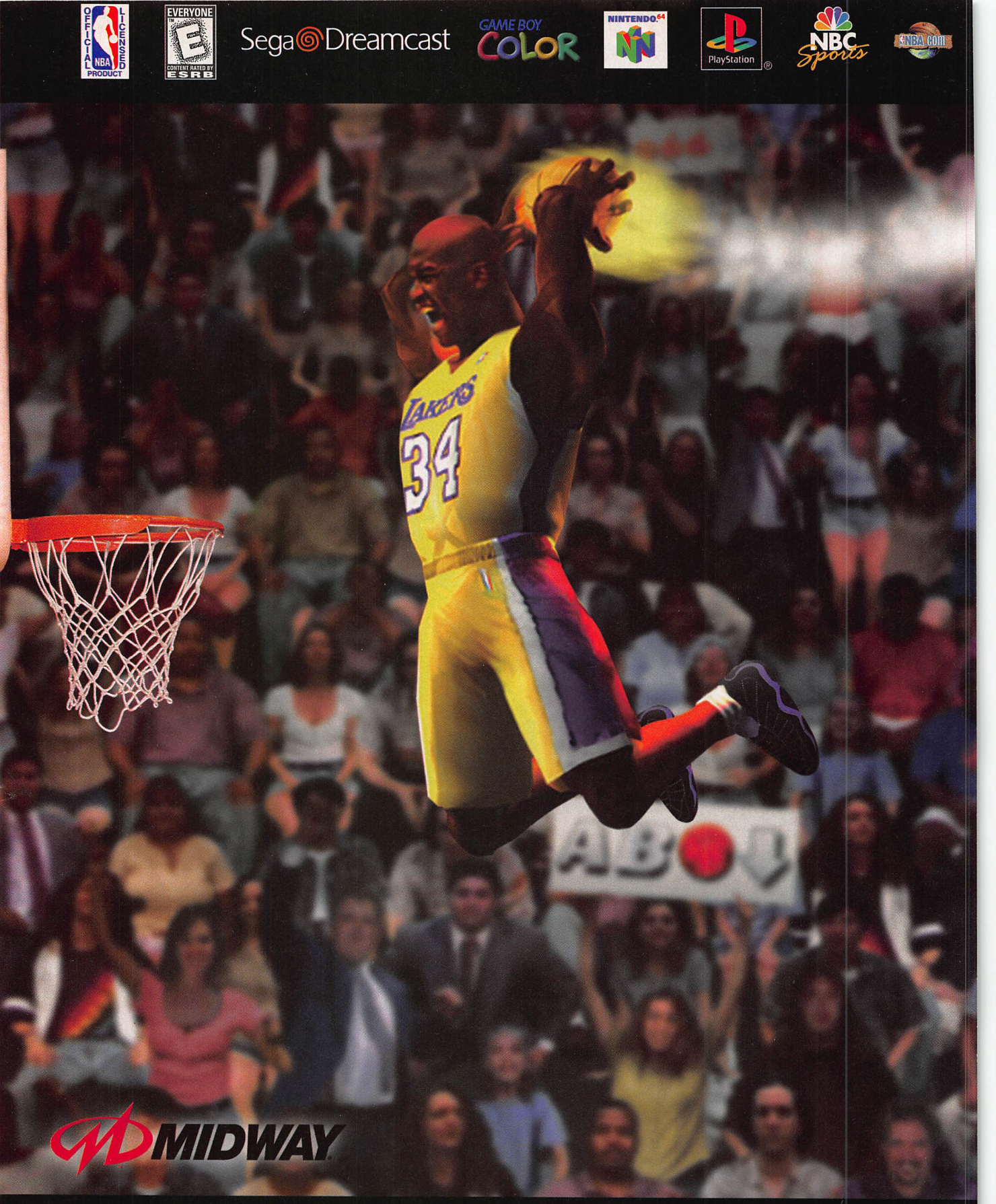
backgrounds have given way to polygons. Part of what makes the first two games a treat to play is the traditional 2D art and animation, yet there is no denying that Arc the Lad III's world is an impressive display. The appealing, nicely animated characters remain sprite-based, but they now cast scintillating 3D spells that flood the screen in battle.

The battle system follows the same basic setup as the previous ones, but this time around, enemies can be seen approaching from designated areas. No longer able to recruit the opposition, you instead can change a monster into a card, calling upon it later in battle. Cards can be stored and traded with villagers, so it is important to determine and search out those cards that will greatly aid in battle. In preparing for combat, characters can also combine and experiment with items and weapons, in search of unknown creations that can sometimes prove invaluable.

As with Arc the Lad II, a job-based system advances your party through multiple scenarios, with as many as 100 tasks to perform. Not all jobs must be accepted to reach the game's finale, but there can be great rewards for complying with every one.

One of the more unique qualities of the Arc the Lad series is the close relationships to the stories. In Arc the Lad III, the conflict continues where II left off, with a few characters also crossing over (just as in Arc the Lad, you can save character data from Arc the Lad II on a memory card and transfer it to the game). When Working Designs releases their 6-disc Arc collection later this year, they plan to integrate the three games in a way that makes them feel like a three-chapter whole. Along with the games, which will be enhanced with Dual Shock support and possible CG opening for Arc the Lad, a Making of Arc Collection and music CD will be part of this exceptional package. It will be the largest gaming anthology ever released, a true collector's item of one of the last RPG series to appear on *the* system for RPGs. **GR**





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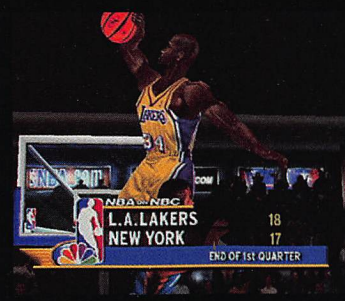
NBA SHOWTIME
NBA ON NBC

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It's over-the-top, two-on-two, leave-your-sorry-excuse-for-a-game-at-home basketball. It's NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC. From Midway, the makers of NFL Blitz™. With four-way, multiplayer action, more than 120 different players and 30 court options. It's basketball the way the pros wish they could play. Bigger, Bolder, Faster. With graphics even stronger than a Shaq dunk. NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC. Light it up.







SOUTH PARK RALLY

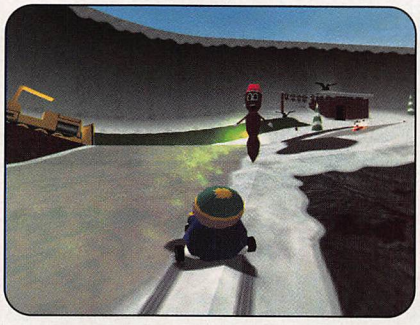
BY DAVE HALVERSON

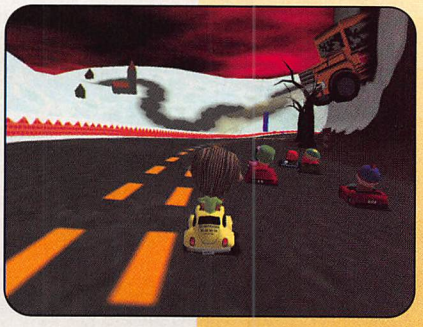
INTRO



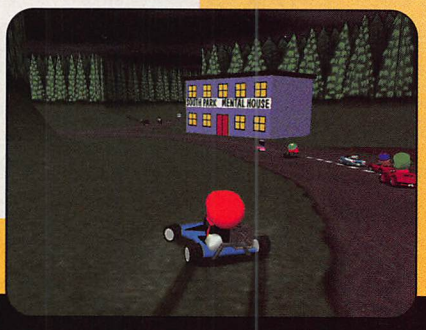
SOUTH PARK?

There are those that say *South Park* is losing ground, and could be on its last legs. Funny, the South Park movie, *Bigger Longer and Uncut,* has appeared on some of the most notable best-of lists in the country and the new shows, especially "Chinpokemon," are as funny as ever. A few of us think the show downright kicks ass (well, I think it's one of the the best shows on TV). Kart racing games are as popular as ever and South Park Rally, besides being as funny as a fart in an elevator, brings a lot new to the table. Diddy Kong Racing and, most recently, Crash Team Racing introduced us to gigantic Adventure modes with huge overworlds to explore and bosses to encounter, and now South Park Rally takes it to the next level, rolling onto every major platform with a wide variety of new features in tow, like multiple gameplay scenarios, 29 playable characters (!), and a mind-boggling assortment of gadgets from the South Park universe. if it's multi-player mayhem and mad racing that you're after, then South Park should be your next destination—if you're old enough to buy it.









These shots were pulled directly off the Dreamcast version, which is currently undergoing exclusive tweaks. Tantalus' simplistic approach, which is true to the series, should allow the game to run at a constant 60 fps.

CHICKENLOVER

The Nintendo 64 version's no slacker. In fact, this engine is pretty amazing. You can drive literally anywhere on the many courses, and pop-up is very minimal.

Just about everything you can imagine from the *South Park* universe has made its way into the game in some capacity. The "Chickenlover" episode, for example, was about a man who liked to have sex with chickens (did I mention that SPR carries the M rating?), and so one of the goals in SPR is to collect and deliver chickens. It works like this: The first race in each area of South Park is straightforward racing, and then the second, depending on the holiday or event, is some kind of scramble, where you have objectives, marked clearly in the lower left portion of the screen. You'll be required to either grab a single item and then cross four checkpoints while the others try to take it away, or collect specific items (like chickens, candy, underpants, etc.) and just hold on. These free-for-alls take a while to get used to, because you really need to familiarize yourself with each area of South Park, but once you do, they're super-sweet. All of South Park Rally's seven courses are nonlinear and each is loaded with shortcuts and secrets, so the races take on an authentic rally feel as well. In all, there are 15 events covering such lovely South Park traditions as Ass Battle, Millennium New Year's Eve, Read-a-Book Day, Spring Cleaning, and every major holiday, taking place in seven areas, so when it comes to depth, SPR delivers.







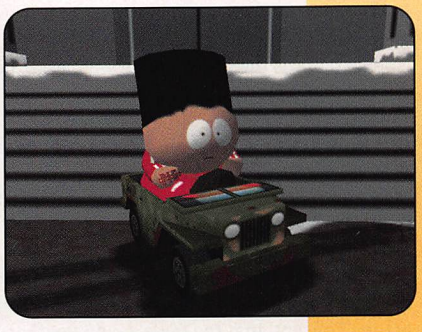


WHO'S BEST?

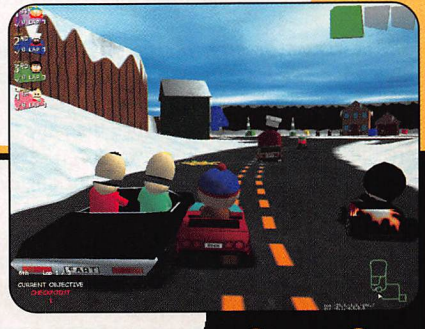
Which SPR is best? To be totally honest (is there any other way?), it's hard to compare the PlayStation and Nintendo 64 versions. The PS game is definitely the weak link. Not that it's bad – the 64 version is just really good, with super-smooth character models, surprisingly little redraw, and nice solid polygons. The PlayStation's inherent z-buffering problems and jittery textures seem magnified in the simplistic South Park universe, and the game does have some evident clipping. The PC version is of course, graphically superior. It's the Dreamcast version though, that is best because Tantalus is employing Dreamcast-specific features to take advantage of the console's superior capabilities. Basically, if you're a *South Park* fan, enjoy hours of multiplayer mayhem, or just love to drive, you're good to go, regardless of the console you own. If you're a stickler when it comes to graphics, however, and only own a PlayStation, now might be a good time to buy a Nintendo 64 (that DK package is a sweet deal) or better yet, do yourself a favor, and get a Dreamcast. C'mon, you deserve it.

And did I really just say that? Yes and yes. While I'm not a fan of the PlayStation game, I highly recommend the other versions. Acclaim pulls out all the stops when it comes to the South Park franchise and has delivered a game worthy of the show's loyal fan base for the second year in a row. SPR delivers on all counts and then some, with great graphics, diverse, entertaining gameplay, big laughs, and plenty of bang for the buck. You can play this game for weeks. I'm honestly not sure how non-fans will receive it. It may prompt more people to tune in, or it could piss a lot more people off. But that's what I love about *South Park*. Won't you join us? **GR**









Pictured right: Resolution makes a difference, yeah? The 64 version (left) doesn't quite measure up to the Dreamcast pics on the right. Still, for an N64 game, it looks pretty sweet.

An Interview with Doug Yellin

Senior Producer-South Park Rally

Gamers' Republic: What role did you play in the creation of SPR?
As senior producer, I'm responsible for the game—it's my baby. While for different projects that involves different things, for Rally I've done a little bit of everything, from locating the developer to designing the game to scriptwriting to testing. It's a lot of work, especially since the group is in Australia where it's currently tomorrow!

GR: Seeing as how the rally genre is getting more and more populated, what does SPR bring new to the table?
It sounds weird to say for a licensed title, but South Park Rally is actually groundbreaking in its gameplay. One of the big problems we initially found with making a South Park racing game was that the object of racing games is to stay far away from everyone else. *South Park* is all about the characters interacting. The two are pretty hard to merge unless you do something new.

Rather than limiting the player to normal track racing (which we do have), we have a great number of unique game modes that let the players go after not only checkpoints, but each other. For example, one race we have is Cow Days. In this race, everyone is diseased and there is only one cure. The racers have to take off after it. The driver who holds onto it is slowly cured. Everyone else must try to ram or shoot him to get it from him. The winner is the one who is fully disease-free. Another race, Read-A-Book Day, challenges the drivers to collect chickens and take them back to the police station to protect them from the Chicken Lover. Again, you can steal chickens from the other players, or try to avoid them. The player who gets 10 rescued first [wins]. There are 15 different race types, offering a lot of variety and challenge. Additionally, once the races and worlds are unlocked, you can play any race type on any world, making for hundreds of different game combinations!

GR: How are the Dreamcast and PC versions superior, other than the graphics?
The Dreamcast [version] is currently in production, and we are discussing a number of unique items to that platform, but nothing I can reveal yet. The PC, while closer to its console brothers, has a few tricks up its sleeve as well, such as network play, more obstacles on the tracks and the S.S.D.M., or Saddam's Secret Dildo Missile weapon.

GR: Is this a new engine developed specifically for SPR or have we seen it in action before?
The engine is the product of Tantalus Interactive, who has kicked ass on it. We ran across the engine as part of a technology demo for another game and snapped it up for Rally before the other game ever got finished, so this is the first time the engine will be on the shelf. I think people will find it pretty advanced.

GR: How big of a role did Comedy Central and/or Trey and Matt play in the game's execution?
Matt and Trey played a vital role in creating Rally as they have for all our South Park games. They not only provide the voices for the game, but also helped us on the creative side with the weapons, cars, scriptwriting, etc. They are really big gamers and have a good understanding of what makes a good video game. The whole structure of the game was actually their concept, that the town would hold races every holiday.

GR: In terms of size, including secret characters, tracks etc., how does SPR measure up to the competition?
Well, I can't disclose exactly what secrets we have, but we have more cars, modes and cheats to unlock than any driving game I know. There are the 15 race types, about two dozen cars, several cool cheats, and seven worlds to play. Finding and unlocking every one should provide a great challenge to people.

GR: Were you inspired by any other rally game in particular?
It's hard not to have been inspired by Mario Kart—it originated the genre—and, of course, Diddy Kong. The initial pitch for Rally was "South Park meets Mario Kart," but it's really evolved into something completely unique.





Mr. Garrison ('m-kay) must stay away from the other players as he's nabbed the prize! Not to worry – Mr. Hanky the Christmas Poo will protect him! Elsewhere, Satan takes some poor soul down the hard way.

GR: Mario Kart and CTR both have special power-slide maneuvers which provide boost. Does SPR have similar nuances?
Although we don't duplicate that exact trick, we do have the Terrence Turbo to help the player "gas" up. For us, many of the nuances come from learning the cars and the worlds, to develop the best strategies on each track for each race type, to find the hidden pickups and the like. Unlike most Kart games, we have completely open worlds where you can drive anywhere and take any route you want. Sometimes going behind buildings may be a shortcut (or expose a powerup). Other times, darting over a hill may be the way to escape the other cars. Learning the ins and outs of the track more than the tricks are what will make you a big rally winner.

GR: Have you guys taken full advantage of the "M" rating? What spectacles might we see (or hear) that do so?
No question, we have. Of course, there's the language which mirrors the TV show. Then, there's our weapons. Some weapon highlights which earned us our "M" are Sparky the Gay Dog who humps your car, Frida the Hooker who gives you herpes that block your view, and Explosive Diarrhea. In some ways the "M" rating can be very freeing. Without it, we would have had a great deal of trouble recreating the feel of the show.

GR: Comparing the PlayStation and N64's 3D capabilities, how do they measure up? What about the Dreamcast vs. PC?
Every system has its own strengths and weaknesses and it's never entirely fair to rate them on only one aspect. The N64 has a few tricks and a faster processor which allows us to make the game perhaps look a little nicer. Conversely, the PSX uses CDs which allow us to have more speech for the characters. As for the DC, we're just starting, but we've been very impressed with its power so far, and are looking to make a version that combines the best features of the consoles and the PC for it.

GR: What have you worked on prior to SPR?
I've been the producer on the Turok series, I worked on South Park 1 and Chef's Luv Shack, on NHL Breakaway, the Bust A Move series, and going way back, the Simpsons games and the old 16-bit WWF games.

GR: Are you guys* South Park *fans?
You can't do this job without being a fan. Otherwise, you wouldn't be able to translate it nearly well enough.

GR: Thank you for your time and for making a rally game for the rest of us.
No prob. Anytime. GR



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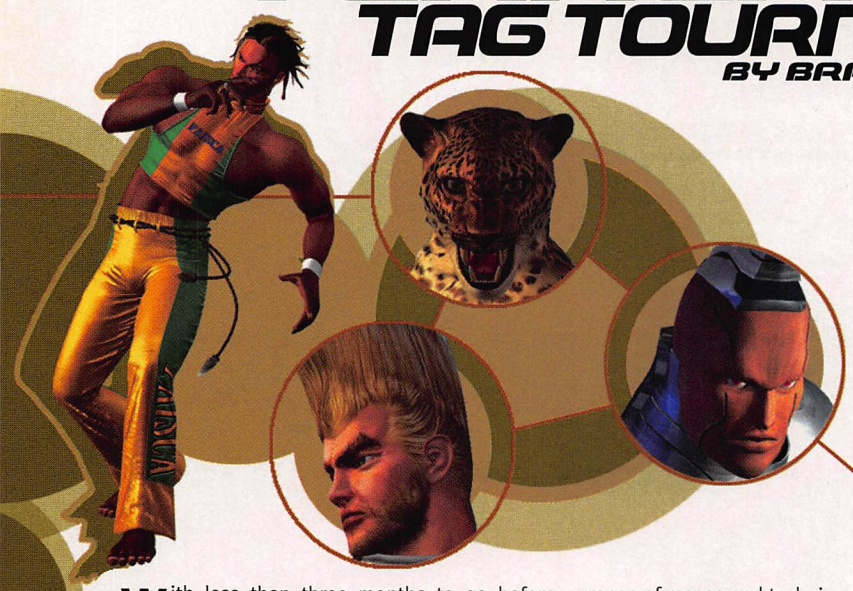
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TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

BY BRADY FIECHTER





With less than three months to go before Sony lets its 128-bit beast out of its cage in Japan, a game like Tekken Tag Tournament makes the anticipation even more numbing. After what Namco did for Soul Calibur on Dreamcast, you can imagine the possibilities of the latest Tekken. Supreme designs will surely fuse with premier technology, and the result will be seismic.

I say this with high expectations, simply because I already know that the arcade Tekken Tag Tournament plays superbly, as expected: much like Tekken 3, only improved and refined in all the right places—it's faster, the matches last longer, the music is improved, and the fighters have been given more balance and a much wider range of moves and techniques.

As its name suggests, Tekken Tag Tournament offers a tag feature as its biggest addition to the superb Tekken formula: pick two of your favorite combatants, and when one gets the crap beat out of him, send him to the sideline to rest. Simple enough, but there's much more to this game than routinely tagging characters in and out. The beauty of the fighting system is the ability to use your partner for tag combos and juggles. If you force an opponent towards the edge of the ring, your partner can perform a side throw, finish an attack or extend a combo, basically adding to the string of moves in a number of strategic ways.

If Tag Tournament's array of features is carbon copied for PlayStation 2, there will be next to nothing to complain about. Namco has a penchant for generosity when it comes to extras, so we can certainly expect the same excellence here that was lavished upon Soul Calibur for Dreamcast. Whatever is added, you'll have your hands full just trying to contend with the multitude of fighters available: at least 20 playable initially, 15 from Tekken 3 and five from Tekken 2, all now greatly enhanced; 14 that are gradually opened; and 12 hidden. Add to all this generosity a level of visual realism and richness far beyond what we're used to, and you now have the latest reason to own a PlayStation 2. **GR**



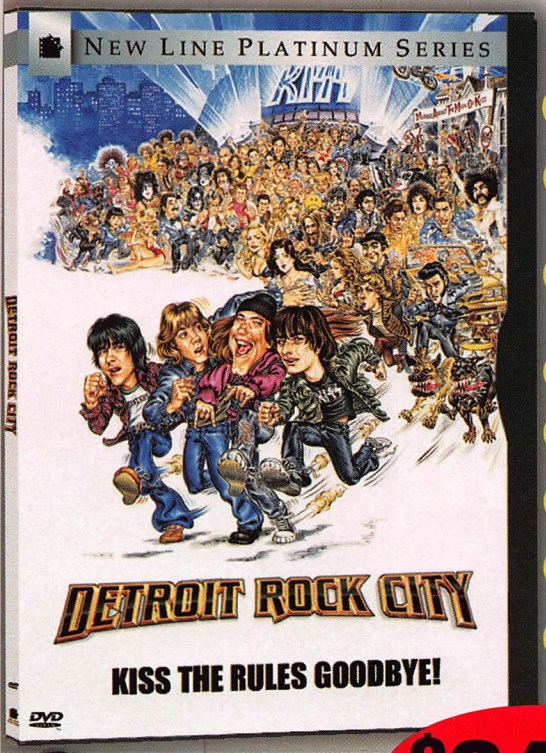






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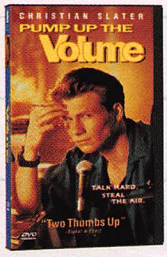
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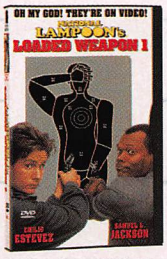
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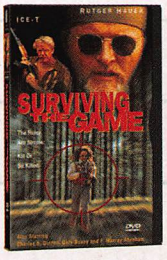
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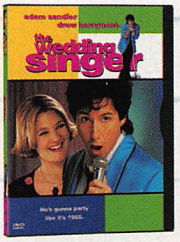
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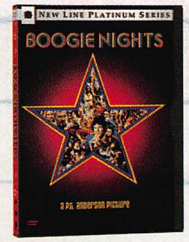
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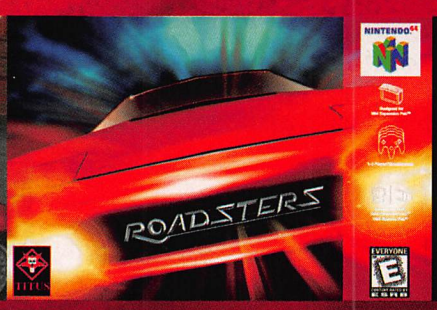
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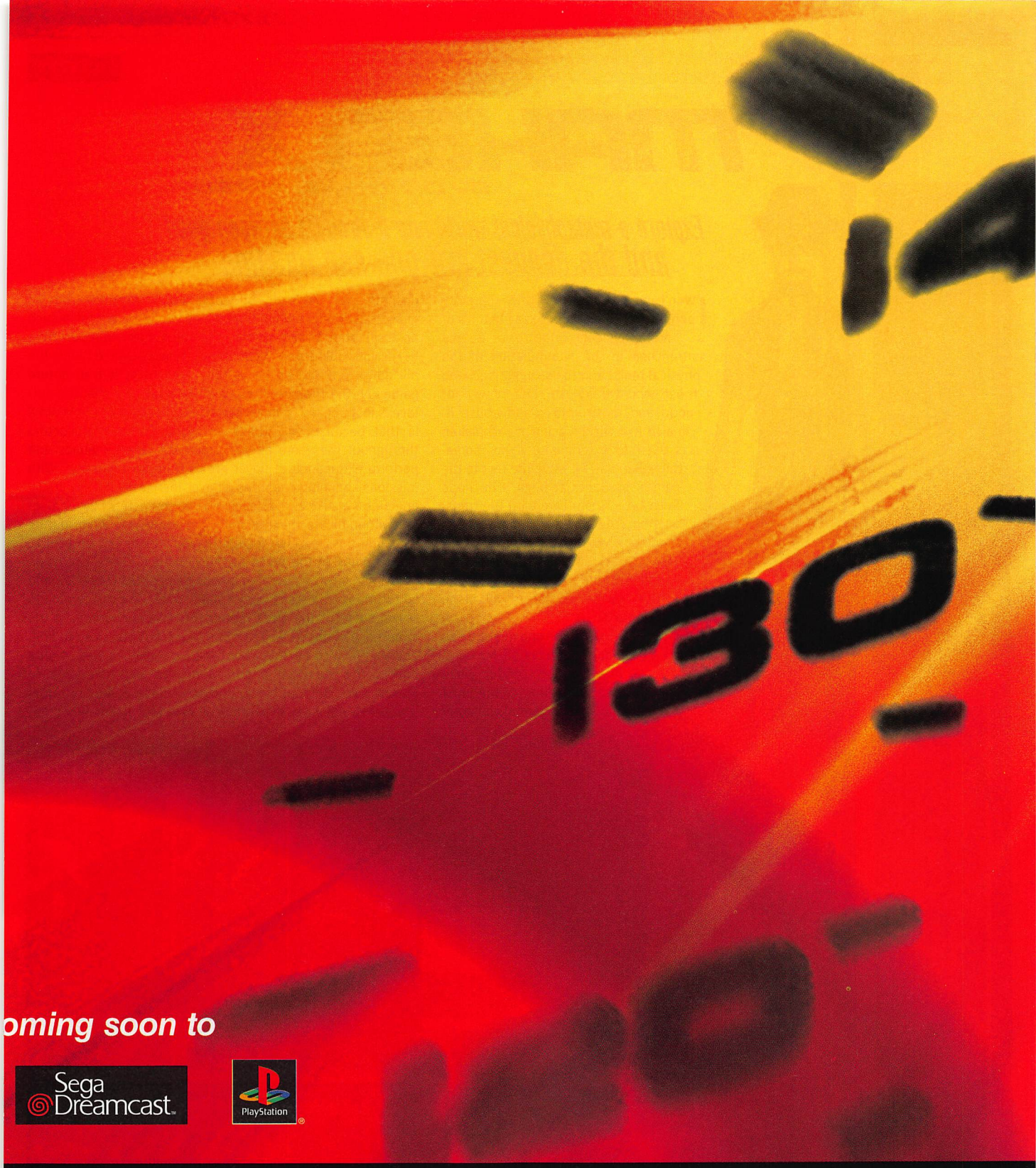
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MAKEN X

BY DAVE HALVERSON

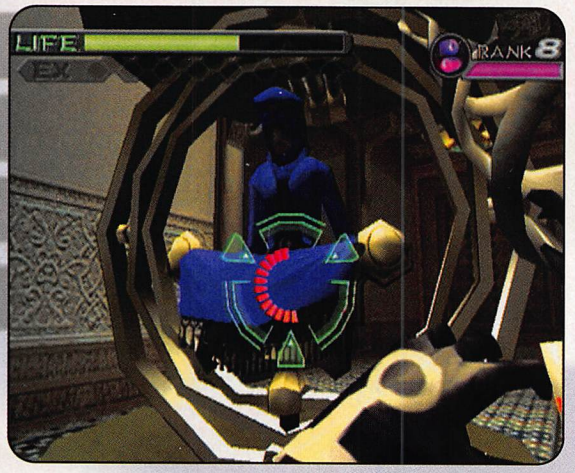
Explore a metaphysical world and a struggle between good and the deepest evil one can imagine

I won't even attempt to clarify the story behind Maken X except to say that it's of a metaphysical nature, deeply entrenched in the manipulation of the physical realm and the struggle between those who would use their power for good and those who would abuse it. Imajyu is a wicked science and Maken is used to exterminate it—or something like that. I'll leave the rest to the game's producer at Sega. I do hope Sega takes great care with the translation, though. This game needs someone with writing prowess who really cares about the subject matter to transcribe it. Otherwise, Maken X's superb ambience will be in jeopardy.

At first glance one might be so inclined as to pass off Maken X as just another corridor game (albeit with some of the most diabolical polygonal character designs ever devised), or worse yet, a corridor shooter designed for play online. Gladly, one would be wrong in such an assumption (which no one could be happier to report than I). For your online gaming strafing pleasure, Quake III fills the bill quite well, but as far as fully realized action/adventure games on the Dreamcast go, well, let's just say that the surface is just beginning to get scratched. The beauty of Maken X is that because you utilize so many different characters throughout the game as you brain-jack fallen enemies and perform extractions, it never grows tiring or laborious. With missions spanning countries all over the globe, no two areas' enemies are alike and, as such, no two characters in your arsenal will eradicate them in quite the same way. Also, during your first pass through a country, you'll likely not be able to access many of the areas or the guardian. These Extraction Points can only be operated by one designated character, and so returning to a stage, they usually open up considerably to reveal some of the most repugnant boss encounters in the annals of gaming, as well as other characters you need to find. There's much to be said about the gameplay as well. A step beyond the usual run 'n' gun associated with this genre, in Maken X you'll jump, block, dodge, and sometimes run from the game's enemies, depending on how well you're suited for

















the task at hand or whether you're locked into one of the game's many traps. Adding further to the many hours of sci-fi grandeur are some of the richest visuals yet seen on the console. The characters are far and away the best DC models I've seen yet, the locales are gorgeous, and a soundtrack befitting the game's dark themes provides aural satisfaction in perfect harmony with the action.

The only question surrounding the U.S. release of Maken X is whether Sega will rate the game M and keep the Nazi insignia and suggestive graphics intact or tone them down and attempt a Teen rating. I find much gratification in the slaughter of Nazi freaks (the Nazi element in the game is not human), and so I'm hoping for the big M. Either way, I'm grateful Kazuma Kaneko's amazing character designs are finally going to get some respect Stateside. It's a shame his amazing Saturn efforts never got the chance. We'll have more on Maken X as soon as a localized version becomes available. **GR**





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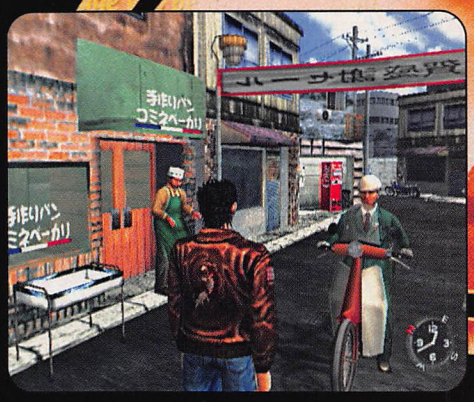
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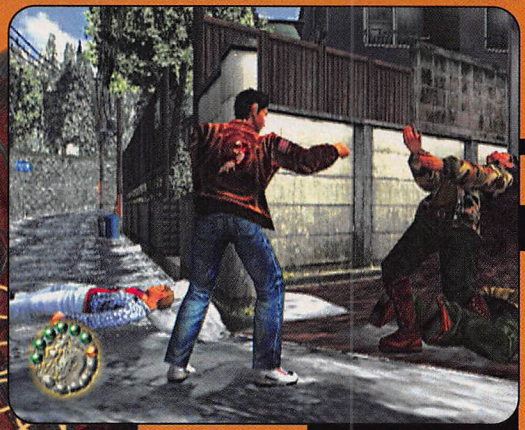
BY MIKE HOBBS

Never has a console game come this close to recreating reality. Yu Suzuki and AM2 have created a virtual masterpiece

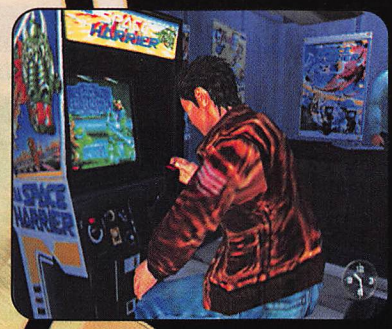
So what is it like to play the most expensive game ever made? Well, you still wiggle a little mushroom and press buttons, but the signals being sent to your brain are absolute magic. Yu Suzuki's $44 million opus is everything it ever advertised itself to be, and every cent (or yen, rather) of that budget-busting price tag is up there on screen when you're playing. Shenmue boasts the most convincingly alive and complete virtual environment that any game has ever had, and Suzuki's audacious goal of creating a game that can be enjoyed by young and old alike has actually been achieved. Of course, the grave danger of his vision was that a game trying to be everything to everyone could have ended up being nothing to no one, but the end result is one of the most stunning pieces of console software ever, and a true reward to gamers.

Shenmue follows the exploits of Ryo, a young man looking to avenge the death of his father, and it is the witnessing of this horrific event that starts the game off on a high note in a brilliant real-time cinema. Conventional stuff thematically to be sure, and the bulk of the early play experience consists of simply exploring the three small towns present in the first disc, speaking to the active populace, and following clues that lead to yet more questions. But never has simply walking around through a game environment been more compelling than it is here. Time passes, weather changes, people go about their daily business, you can stop and talk to anyone. And in the actual rendering and detailing of this world, Shenmue elicits oohs and ahhs. There is so much attention paid to every aspect of the environment that it literally boggles the mind. In Ryo's house, for instance, you can rummage through closets, open drawers and cabinets, even fish out an old Saturn from underneath the television. Once

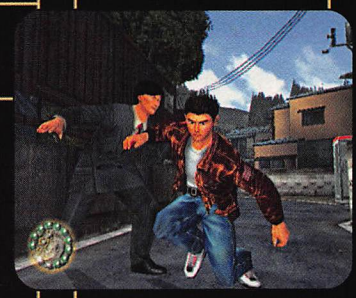












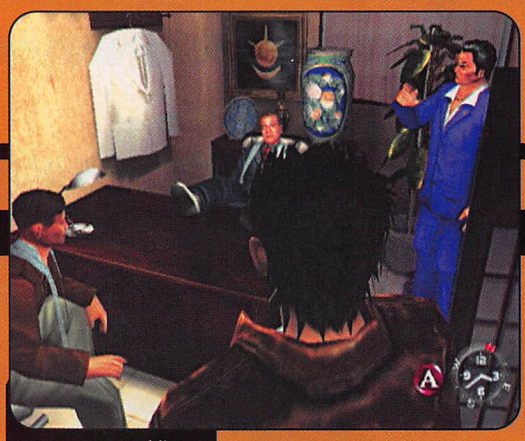
out on the streets, you can venture into an arcade that's complete with working versions of Space Harrier and Hang On, and even buy little Sega trinkets from gumball machines or take care of an orphaned kitten. And the look of the game's towns captures the exact feel of any number of small Japanese communities, and is simply a marvel to look at, or for that matter, to listen to. From the rich score and ambient sounds to the speech patterns of Japanese mafia and the accents of the American and Chinese characters, Shenmue's aural tapestry is at least as advanced as its visual one.

But what of Shenmue's play? As promised, it's very streamlined and intentionally broadly appealing and accessible, simple where other games are complex. As most probably know by now, Shenmue features a mix of real-time battle scenes and the more common Quick Timer Events. Here, you've got to react to onscreen prompts, either a button or D-pad direction in lightning-fast action scenes. Far from being unengaging or unexciting, these bursts of action are supremely choreographed and thrilling to both play and watch, and are perfect counterpoints to extended bouts of simply walking around talking to people and interacting with the world.

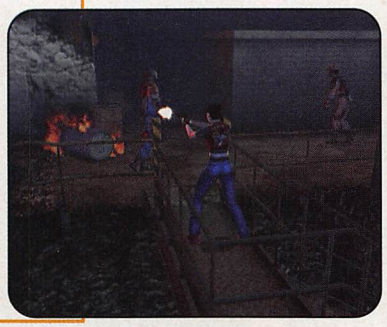
To those impatient enough to snatch up the import before the subtitled version debuts later this year, all I can say is good luck. You can waste a lot of time looking for a specific person without understanding which building to look in or what part of town to explore; you've got to have some basic knowledge of Japanese to make any headway in this game. There are always FAQs, but playing a game like this while to a script is to taint the wonder of the experience.

So look at this as a sneak peek at the first couple of discs of Yu Suzuki's epic. It's an astounding achievement, as it had to be to live up to its pre-release hype, but this new style of game sets new standards in execution and technical artistry, and is truly a sight to behold. **GR**











CODE: VERONICA

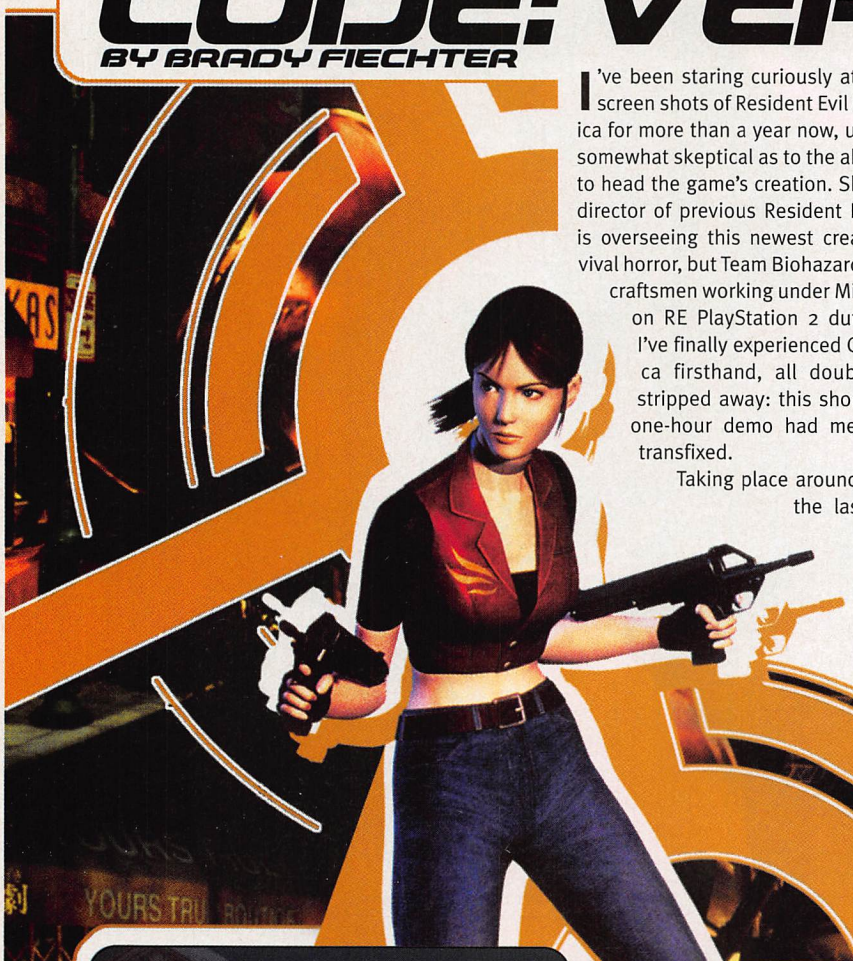
BY BRADY FIECHTER

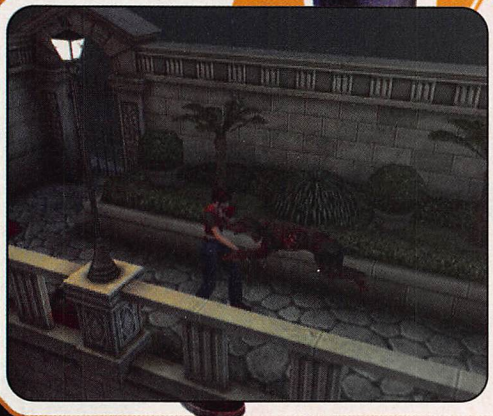
I've been staring curiously at demos and screen shots of Resident Evil Code: Veronica for more than a year now, unimpressed, somewhat skeptical as to the ability of Sega to head the game's creation. Shinji Mikami, director of previous Resident Evil projects, is overseeing this newest creation of survival horror, but Team Biohazard, the master craftsmen working under Mikami, are off on RE PlayStation 2 duty. Now that I've finally experienced Code: Veronica firsthand, all doubt has been stripped away: this short but telling one-hour demo had me completely transfixed.

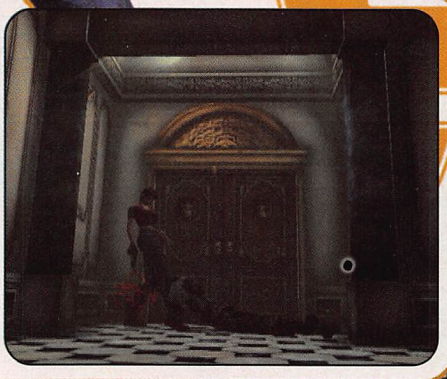
Taking place around the time of the last two Resident Evil titles, Code: Veronica focuses on Claire and her brother Chris. Having been captured by Umbrella in Europe, Claire is taken to an island security complex, from which she soon escapes. Midway through the quest, the setting shifts to Antarctica.

The game's immediate glory is its visual splendor, using real-time lighting and richly detailed environments to create an inescapable atmosphere of mystery and dread. Code: Veronica's creators exhibit an encompassing grasp of cinematic technique, framing the action from multiple angles that greatly enhance the level of immersion. For example, there is a moment in the game where Claire moves towards a desk, and the camera moves outside the frosted window, looking in at a sharp angle—extremely effective.

On a level of sophistication and detail—facial complexity is striking—only Shenmue can rival this incredibly promising game. Whether it soars in its final form will depend on the gameplay, which seems faithful to past games in the series: entertaining puzzles, an expansive story, intense action. And, of course, lots of zombies. GR









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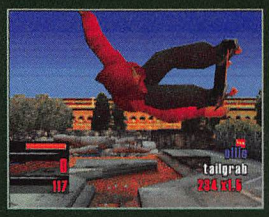
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The bass rumbles and the blood flies in Yuke's dark, violent, and classy 3D action game

BERSERK

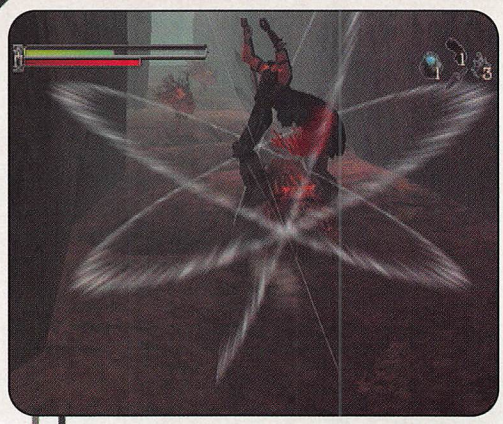
BY MIKE HOBBS

Video game violence can be exhilarating. There are those who would rather this not be the case, but to deny this fact is to deny that the human nervous system was formed in a hostile and dangerous environment. With varying degrees of sanity, we've all felt that almost cathartic pleasure in decimating virtual characters, and Yuke's dark, bloody 3D action game makes the most of this seemingly hard-wired predilection.

But Berserk isn't some trashy, shock-value effort where the gore embarrassingly and irresponsibly tries to overcome shoddy design. Instead, the game is actually rather sophisticated in its design and execution, revealing an extra measure of talent and dedication on the part of its developer. Telltale signs include the elaborately voice-acted real-time cinemas, absence of static load screens, and gameplay that cuts to the chase and gives you exactly what you want: mass carnage with good, manageable control.

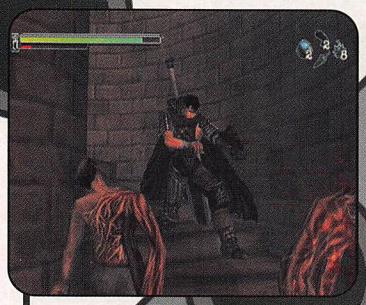
Guts, your stoic, hard-ass character, has enough moves to keep the action interesting, but not so many that he becomes a chore to handle. Jumping attacks, multi-button combos, a devastating nail gun, and even small grenades can be unleashed with ease. And in one of the game's finer touches, your massive sword can be rendered almost useless in tight corridors as it realistically sparks against a wall, its arc stunted by the obstruction. The feel of this is just right, as it is when you're swinging that huge sword through throngs of mutated humans and massive bosses. The sensation of the blade's inertia and an exaggerated bass note as the sword whooshes through the air and slices through flesh combine to form great satisfaction that begs to be repeated again and again.

Let's hope that whoever publishes Berserk in the U.S. will the leave the game as is, giving America this stupendous action game in undiluted form. As of press, Ubi Soft seems to be the front runner, and if their straightforward translation of Evolution is any indication, that is exactly what we can expect. GR











GRAND THEFT AUTO IS BACK

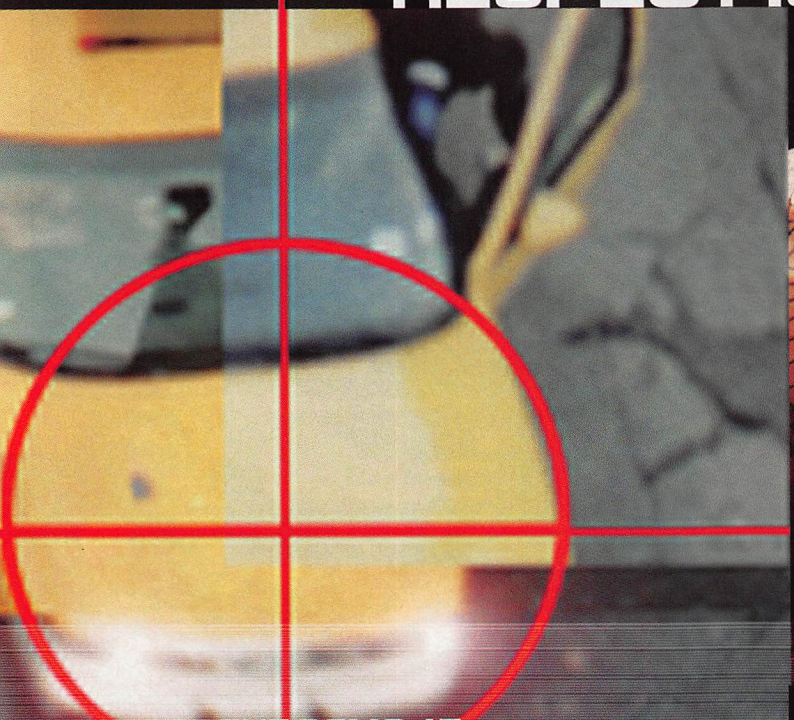
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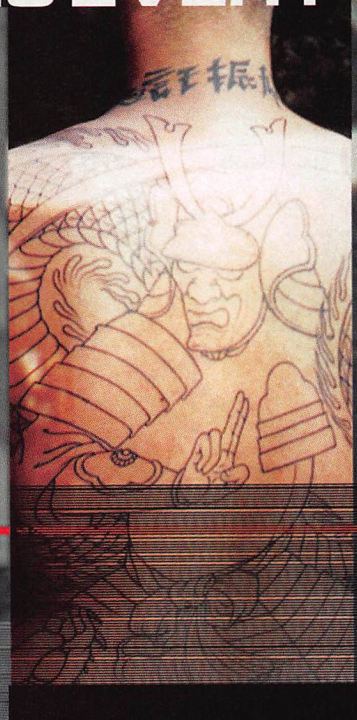
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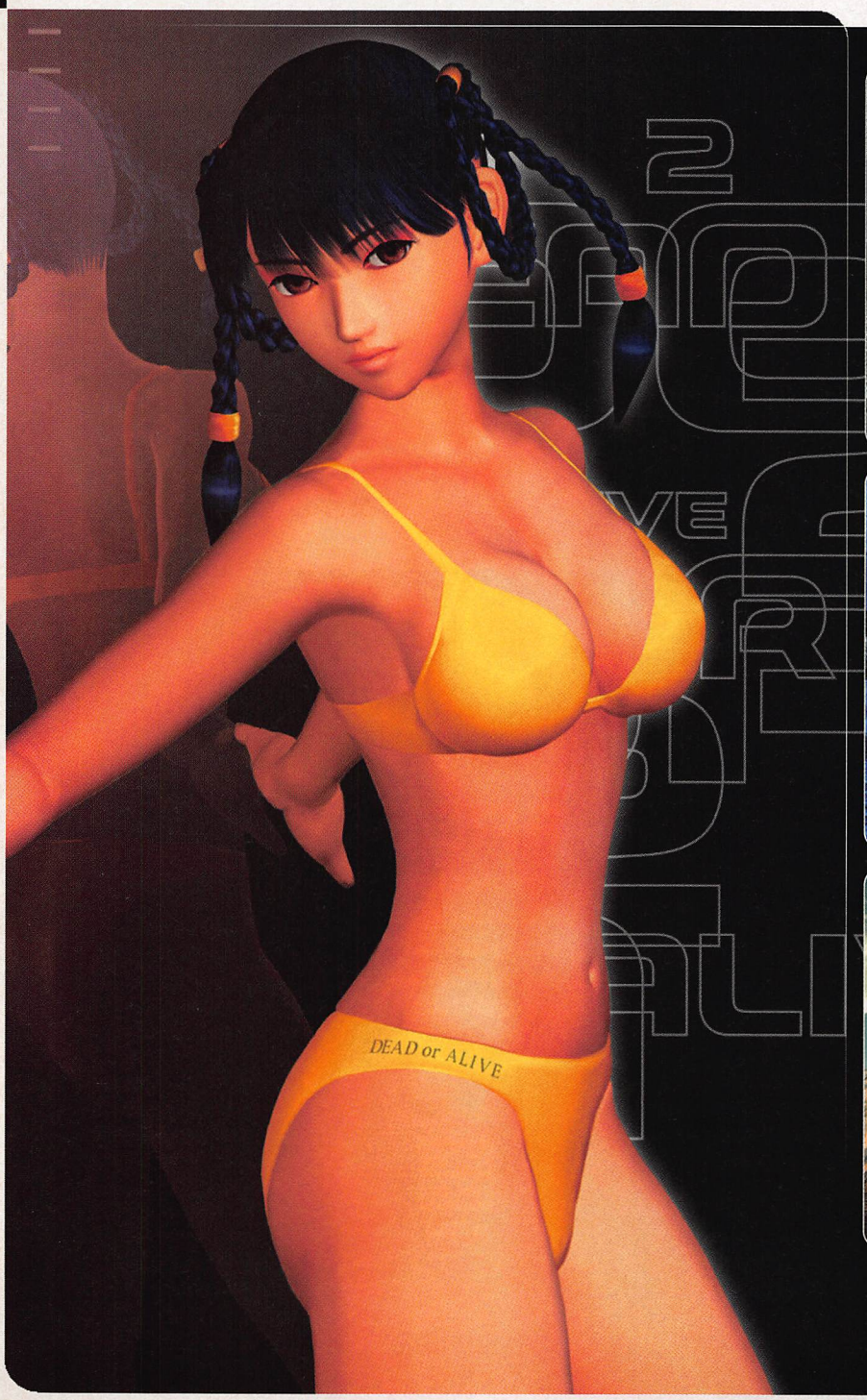
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DEAD OR ALIVE 2

BY DAVE SMITH

And so we return, after eight months and 29 days, to the expansive realms of the Speed Maniac Programmers of Team Ninja. Dead or Alive 2 has gone from blurry MPEG downloads to complete arcade release in Japan and the U.S. (it's just beaten out Tekken Tag for the title of most popular arcade game in Japan). The Dreamcast port is only a couple of months away. In the intervening time, one might think that the thunderous debut of Soul Calibur and the looming presence of PS2 Tekken would have stolen from the anticipation for Tecmo's lead project. In most cases, one would be thinking along the appropriate lines. Not, however, in the case of your humble narrator, who spent far too many midnight hours tirelessly perfecting his Kasumi survival record to want anything else in his Dreamcast. And before you ask, it's because I liked the gameplay better than Tekken's. Yes, that's my story, and I'm sticking to it.

Certain of our associates vehemently insist that, despite the contrary insistence of Team Ninja's Itagaki-san, DOA2 cannot be powered by a single Naomi board. The visuals are that impressive. As far as that relates to prospects for the DC version, the proof is in the pudding, which will come out of the oven in short order. In the meantime, while the arcade version perhaps does not match DC Soul Calibur in terms of character detail and animation (Namco's supreme motion-capture will probably not be topped for some time), its environments are as stunning as they've always been. They're so large that Ryu Hayabusa's vaunted waterfall dive and its cousin, the Jann-Lee stained-glass window plum-







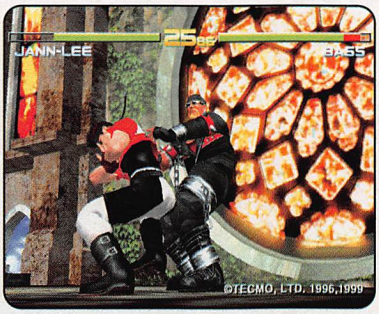


The Naomi hardware proves its power with Tecmo's massive, detailed arenas

met, are not as significant a gameplay element as was once thought; there's that much space to fight in.

Free movement in these arenas is accomplished through the use of the aptly-named "free" button. When held down, it allows you to run in all directions. It also replaces the hold button from the original DOA; you use it in conjunction with joystick motions to deflect attacks and execute offensive grappling techniques. The addition expands the number of options available to the player, while keeping the interface down to a streamlined three buttons. By all accounts it also makes defensive holds much trickier; only the skilled will be able to pull off the seemingly endless reversal exchanges that remain DOA's true hallmark. The tag-team gameplay, only just unlocked in the new arcade revisions, includes double-team attacks (like the Tina/Bass spike piledriver), and unlike Tekken Tag, both characters fight to the end; no bowing out after a single knockout.

Next month, if the Fates allow, we'll have had a chance to play the Dreamcast version of DOA2, and if Tecmo has been kind, we'll be able to document the addition of bizarre costumeage a-plenty. The arcade contains at least a few alternate outfits; Tina, as you can see, has swapped her leathers for a slightly more conservative look, and word has it that, buried somewhere in the game, two sets of the dreaded seifuku are waiting for Kasumi and Ayane. But, ahem, we're not interested in that sort of silliness. GR















STREET FIGHTER III

BY MIKE HOBBS

A system designed primarily to push around polygonal graphics has no business playing host to a perfect conversion of Street Fighter III, but that's exactly what it does. Street Fighter III represented a huge leap in animation quality when it was released two years ago in arcades on Capcom's CPS3 hardware, and its replication on Dreamcast is nearly unbelievable. All the frames seem to be intact, and one need look no further than Elena's jaw-dropping idle animation to see this. But almost more amazing than the myriad animation frames is the near lack of load times. Within seconds of selecting your characters, the match is beginning. Amazing. And this Dreamcast conversion of Street Fighter III is also notable for including both the original SFIII and its update, Second Impact, which featured two new characters (the incredibly animated and goofy Hugo and the Gil-derived Urien), plus a number of small gameplay tweaks.

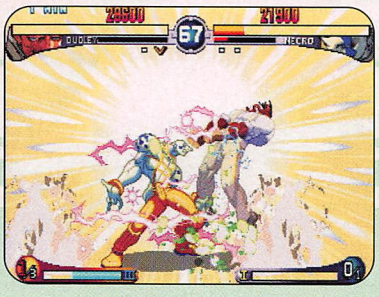
There are those who feel that the sheer amount of animation present in SFIII hinders its gameplay, robbing it of the lightning-quick responses of something like Alpha 2. This may be true to a certain extent, but the quality of the play is undeniable. To me, the game feels really good, and the addition of the parry feature, the biggest single change to the SF formula, allows for new levels of skill and timing prowess, as attacks and even throws can be knocked away.

Treasure this game. If, or rather, as, the trend away from 2D continues, games such as this will simply cease to exist. So treasure this, the most well animated, hand-drawn fighting game that will probably ever be, recreated perfectly on the Dreamcast. Currently available in Japan, expect Capcom to release it in the States sometime this year. GR

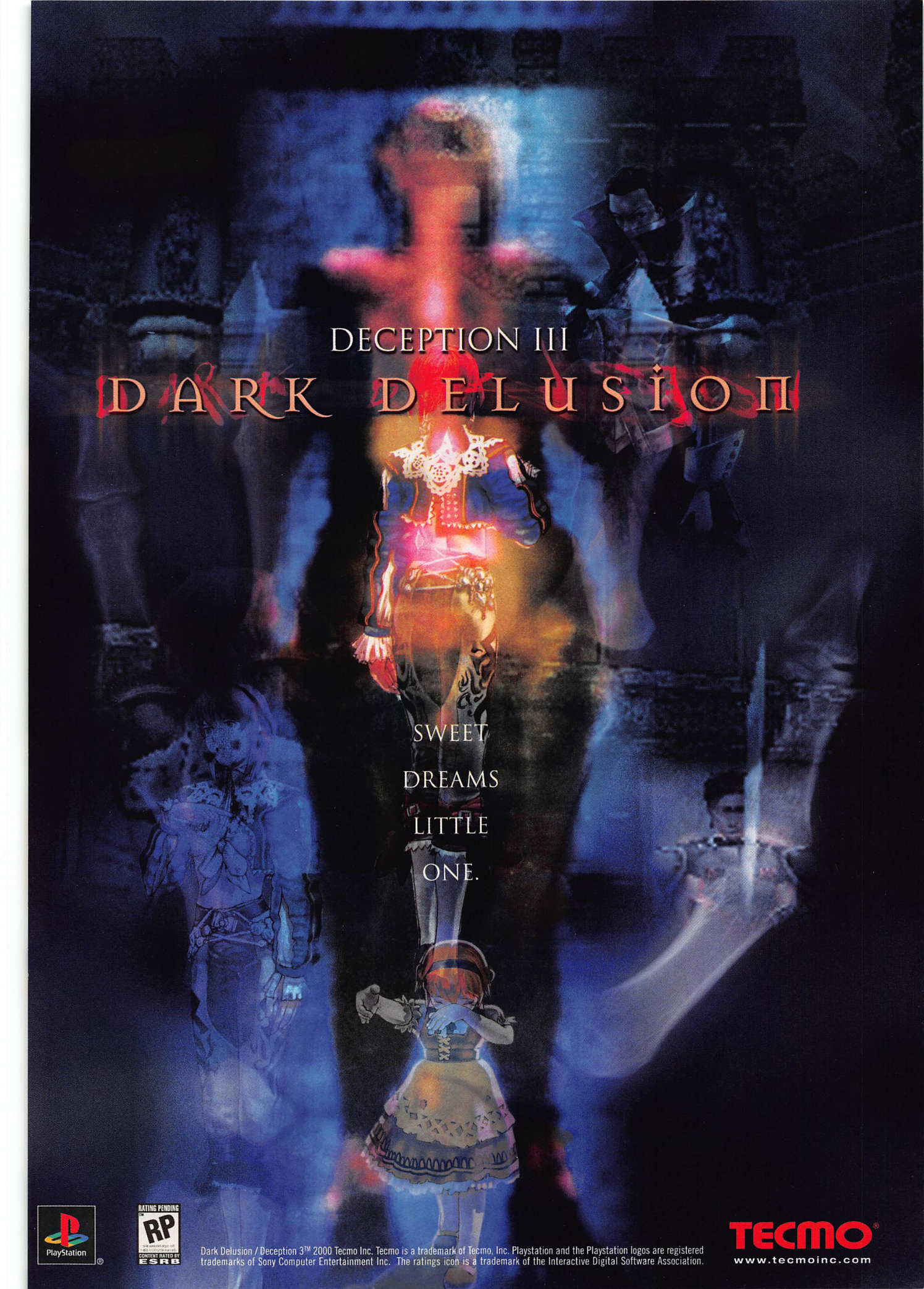












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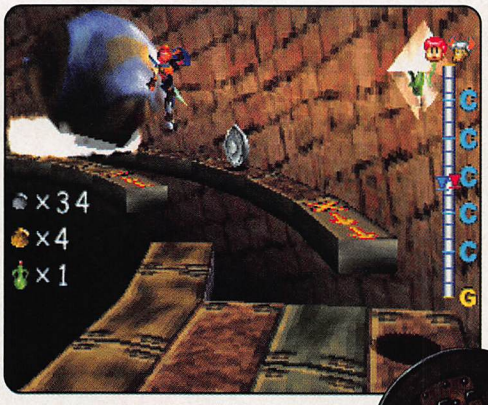
ALUNDRA 2

BY J.R. HAUGEN

Puzzle-solving, role-playing, platforming—Alundra 2 has it all.

A lively adventure with pirates, toilets, and wind-up beasts





The original Alundra was a hand-drawn wonder, so fans may be disappointed to learn that Matrix has dropped that look in favor of the latest technology in video games: many, many polygons. But don't fret—Alundra 2 is fun despite that the only hand involved in the graphics was, if anything, a robot's.

You start the game as the semi-pubescent pirate-hunter Flint, infiltrating a colossal airship run by cyborg drones who shout "Gi! Gi!" in a very unsettling way. You have a run-in with a family of pirates, which culminates in the destruction of the ship and you plummeting into the ocean. As in the first game, you wind up on the beach, and the adventure begins. You soon learn that the kingdom's magician, Mephisto, is using Clockwork Knight-esque wind-up keys to turn ordinary creatures into mechanical monstrosities. This may sound cool, but the townspeople won't stand for it, so you have to stop him.

Alundra 2 perfectly blends several types of gameplay elements, ranging from 2D combat and platforming to 3D exploration and puzzle-solving, much like in the original. There are also several mini-games, making the game genuinely fun on many different levels. But unlike the original, which featured head-splitting puzzles from beginning to end, the sequel moves at a much easier pace.

The combat system is simple and effective: you can upgrade your sword and shield five or so times, and that's it. The magic system is only slightly more complicated, so the game really allows you to focus on the puzzles. The world is also simple: the towns are small and contained, and travel between towns and dungeons is as easy as walking lines on the map.

Alundra 2 looks to be, as far as gameplay goes, a worthy successor to the first one, and a nice homage to the classic Genesis title Landstalker. Add a soundtrack that's about as good as something Square would come up with, and near-perfect camera controls, and the result will be bunches of fun to play.

GR









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DRAGON VALOR

BY DAVE HALVERSON

While we continue to hold a vigil for Klonoa, Namco's latest action offering is on the table, and while it's not quite the spectacle Klonoa was (few games are), it's a game worth your attention—especially if you like dragons. The levels in Dragon Valor, set among a vast mountainous landscape (represented via overworld map), consist largely of 2D gameplay among a diversity of medieval 3D environments. They contain a steady dose of swordplay with a fully realized moves menu, an interesting brand of enemies, and a good bit of platforming as you make your way across the vast countrysides and castle keeps. Taking things quite a bit further, the lead character in DV levels up, earning an impressive new suit of armor, and has a plethora of magic attacks and healing spells at his fingertips, or sword tip as it were. Adding further to the tried-and-true action formula that is in full effect here, DV is rich in pattern-based fighting, platforming and dodging. There's also quite a bit of dialogue between the characters, which is the only aspect of the game I'm reluctant to comment on since DV wasn't yet fully localized at press time. Then again, I can't think of the last time that story elements made or broke an action game. Regardless, it's all about the epic dragon encounters in the end anyway. If it's big-time boss fighting you're thirsting for, Dragon Valor delivers with a mighty roar. Check back for the review next month and we'll update you on the game's length and other features as we delve deeper into Namco's latest PS action endeavor. **GR**









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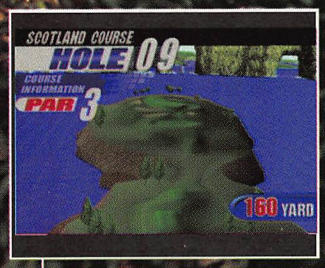
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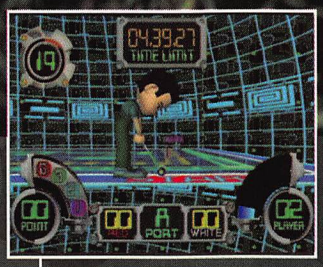
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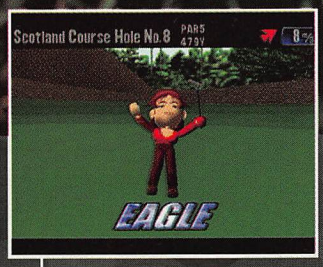
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ROAD RASH

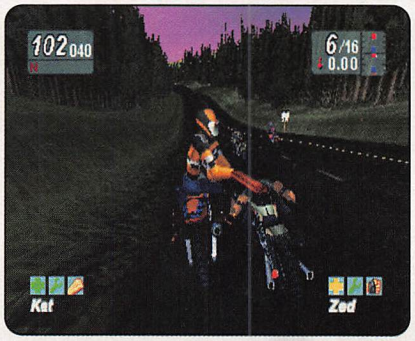
BY DAVE HALVERSON

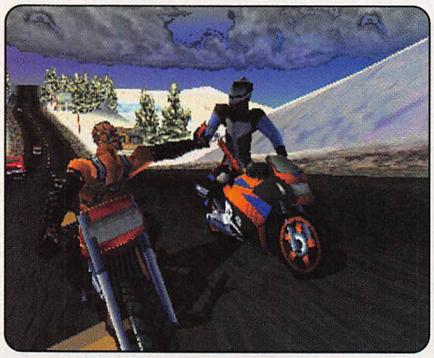
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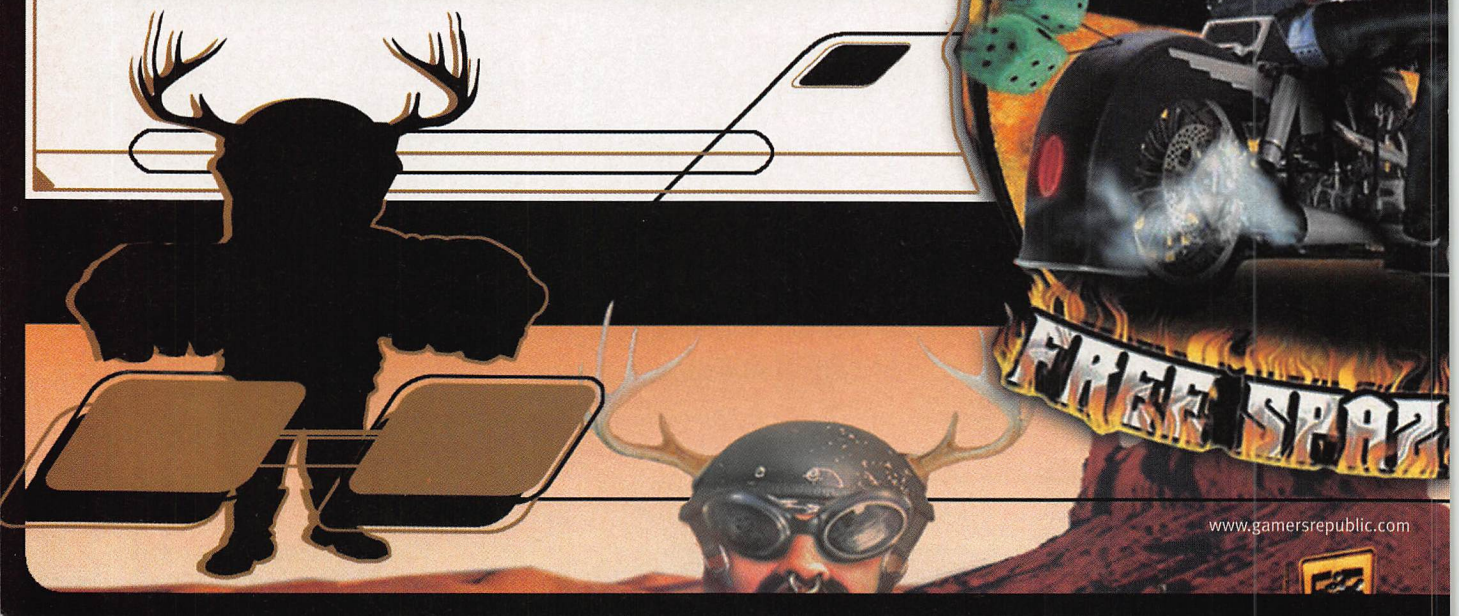
For the first time since 1992 I was genuinely concerned about this franchise—one I have been especially fond of—as a result of Pacific Light and Power's hideous N64 version. Initially I was thrilled at the prospect of a Nintendo 64 version. After what the console did for Kart Racing, with Mario Kart and later Diddy Kong Racing (not to mention what it did for the new Beetle under the watchful eye of EA), I imagined a game that would far exceed the prowess of '98s Road Rash 3D, a game which I enjoyed immensely. Sadly though, the game looked a mess and only played well (mildly well that is) in multiplayer mode. It mimicked nothing that made Road Rash a household name and didn't even nick the surface of the 64's capabilities. So it is with great pleasure that I can proclaim the Rash is officially back. Wait a second, that sounded funny. Road Rash is officially back!

Jailbreak looks like the best Genesis version on steroids, with great forward visibility, excellent environments, hilly roads, and excellent detail. The control's a breeze via the buttery dual analog, and the game churns out a quiver of gritty tunes. But most importantly, with Jailbreak, EA returns to the nasty, exaggerated interface that made the 3DO game such a treat. Who could ever forget that soiled toilet bowl or those twisted mug shots? And on top of all this madness you can now play as the fuzz! Uh, I mean "Five-o," although the real goal here is to save Spaz, the greatest rasher of all time. To do so you first have to join a gang (cruisers or rice burners, what's it gonna be?) and then rise through the ranks by winning amidst the most violent rashing yet, complete with super combos for supreme pummelage of your rivals! Once you've proven you can hang with the best of 'em, well, it's off to bust Spaz out of the can. There's also two new multiplayer modes in RRJ, including Sidecar, where one player drives while the other beats enemy riders! That freaky little dwarf on this page? Well, you can guess where he fits in, or, ah, what he fits in. Watch out Mini Me, this dude's nasty! GR









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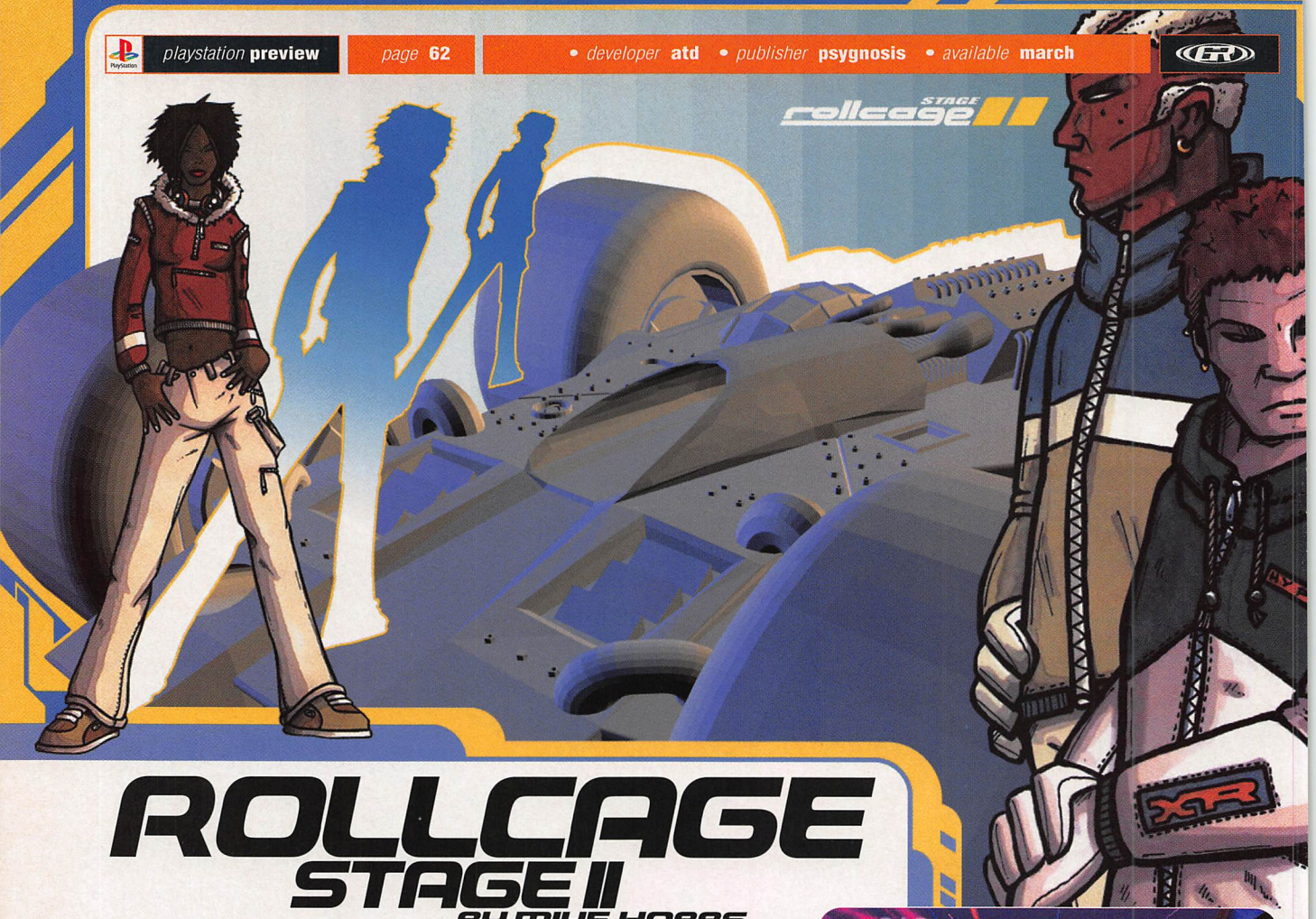
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ROLLCAGE STAGE II

BY MIKE HOBBS

For all its innovation, the first Rollcage was often frustrating—a kind of out of control ride that wasn't always pleasant. The freedom of being able to drive along ceilings and walls introduced an exciting dynamic that also led to frequent bouts of tumbling and spinning as penance for not racing around the track cleanly. Developers ATD took note of these criticisms. The result: Rollcage Stage II is a far more forgiving yet equally exhilarating combat racer with enough new features to easily justify its place in the universe.

In tackling the main criticism of the first game, ATD took a number of steps. A tweaked camera and physics model improve a player's ability keep his bearing, but it's in the design of the new racing courses that the designers have made the biggest strides. Though still challenging, there are fewer nasty corners and surprises, consequently, the tracks are now faster and more enjoyable. The game has been tamed a little, but to good effect. It shifts the emphasis from competing against the course to competing against your opponents, and the balance struck is exactly where the first game should have been.

But ATD didn't stop there. They've designed all manner of new gameplay modes to keep things fresh for returning players. One of my favorites in this preview version is a mode called Scramble, where you've got to negotiate as quickly as possible a thin, curvy strip of track with no walls that's suspended in mid-air. There are also new combat arenas and rewards for performance at every turn.

Rollcage Stage II is shaping up to be a fantastic sequel. It's looking better than the original in nearly every way as its concept begins to reach a satisfying maturity. Between this and Wipeout, Psygnosis has all but got a lock on the futuristic combat racing genre. **GR**











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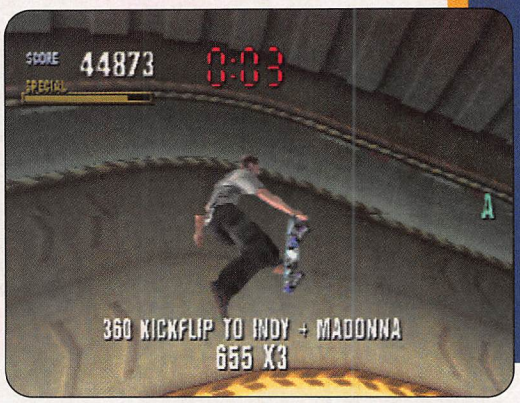
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TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER

BY TOM STRATTON

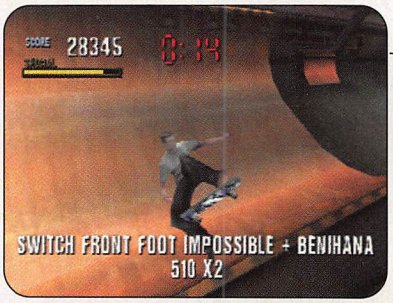
It's been nearly seven months since I had my first go with this game on the PS and here I am now, just as excited as I play it for the N64. Maybe it's because of the lack of any other great software, or maybe it's just because I have risen to a level greater than I thought possible; as I play this game, I am learning from others that there are lines within levels I never even comprehended.





As for this version, almost everything seems to be intact. All of the skaters, including Officer Dick (heh, heh), are present, as well as all of the levels and music tracks, some minus the lyrics. The frame rate is smooth for the most part, but crowded areas seem to choke up the poor N64 and cause moments of slow down. Also, the redraw in the outdoor levels seems a little precarious. Large buildings flash on screen, then slowly begin to fade into their colors.

These are minor issues when you get down to the whole flavor the game delivers. The controls are tight and responsive. All of the moves default to the camera buttons, which is nice. Rolling or sliding your thumb over the different buttons to create phat combos has never been easier. And best of all...no loading! I tell ya, I generally try not to get over eager and loose patience, but I could never get to the game fast enough on the PS. Now, everything pops up and can immediately be forwarded without loading.



I looked hard for any new features, but the most notable differences at this stage are actually a few missing elements: there are no video screens; no opening sequence; and when I beat the game, there was nothing. Which makes me even more interested to see what a final ROM will produce. Other subtle differences: the fountain in the city level is without flowing water, and there are some missing water effects in the mall.

Otherwise, the game is everything it should be. Keep it in mind, if you haven't spent *many* hours playing this game, you probably won't even notice the changes. And who knows, when the final shows up, these may all be corrected.

GR



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER HEADED FOR DREAMCAST!

It's not coming from Activision or Neversoft, which has us a bit worried, but if it uses the same engine with enhanced player models and cleaner textures, it should stay intact. The game Sega fans hoped for is on the way—yet another Dreamcast game that will sell hardware. Look for more in the coming months!

OGRE BATTLE 64

BY MIKE HOBBS

The N64's first Ogre Battle game gets the deluxe treatment from Atlus.

A 50-hour quest awaits in this massive, 320-megabit strategy/RPG epic

Allaying fears to the contrary, Atlus is indeed bringing Quest's fantastic N64 Ogre Battle game stateside this spring. Wonderfully subtitled Person of Lordly Caliber, this third entry in the Ogre Battle series will delight open-minded followers of the series, and newcomers will be sucked in by its addictive strategy and lush graphics. In fact, it's the wonderful visual presentation that most impresses in Ogre Battle 64, with Quest's appealing character design and aesthetic sense taking center stage. The game's well-conceived mix of pre-rendered and real-time graphics strikes a great visual chord, and the filtering effects of the N64 gives the game an attractive cohesiveness.

Ogre Battle 64 will also neatly fill a glaring hole in the N64's software library. Whereas PlayStation owners have had games like Final Fantasy Tactics, Ogre Battle, Tactics Ogre, and Vandal Hearts II, N64 players have been left out in the cold with regards to Japanese-style strategy games. And as a primer, Ogre Battle 64 couldn't be better with its simple, intuitive gameplay. For example, the complexity of controlling individual troops during battle is not part of this particular Ogre Battle's design, moving more of the gameplay to the actions leading up to a fight. But don't mistake this for a lack of depth, as there's still plenty of strategy to wrap your head around. The intricacies inherent in configuring your troop formations before battle and the order in which you tackle enemy units becomes paramount, and it is here that the game earns equal status against previous Ogre Battles.

Currently in the process of being translated for domestic release, this gargantuan 50-hour, 320-megabit game is just what the American N64 needs, and should have little trouble attracting attention when its released this spring. The game has already achieved a huge success in Japan, and there's no reason that the game shouldn't achieve similar status here. Look for a full review next month. GR

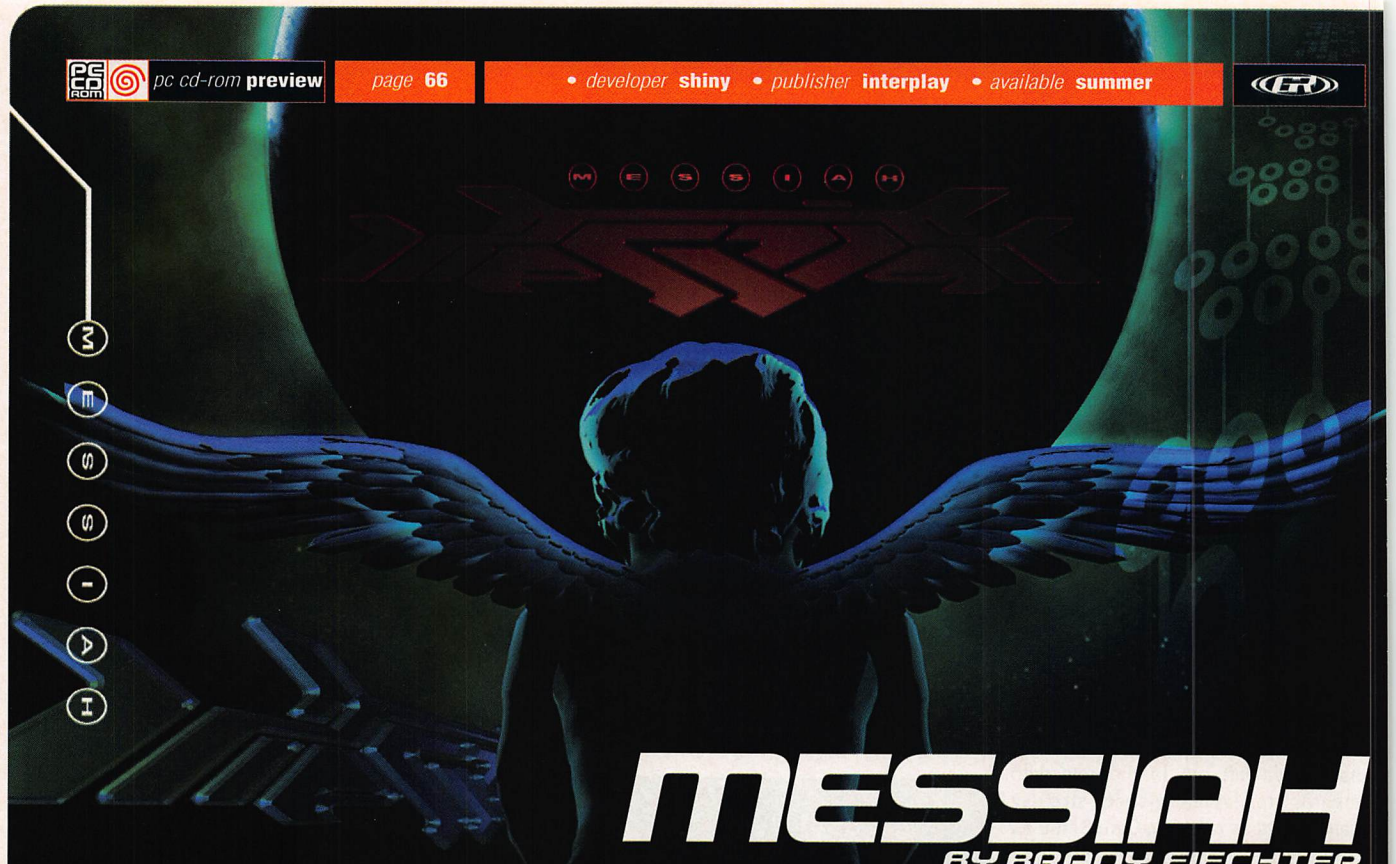








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MESSIAH

BY BRADY FIECHTER

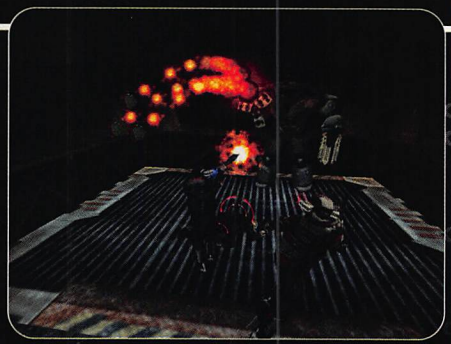
The future world in Shiny's Messiah has descended into a spiritual wasteland of ruin and pestilence. Needless to say, God is not pleased with his creation's downward spiral, so he orders an ordinary angel named Bob to head to Earth for a mass cleansing. Imbued with the handy power of possession, Bob is able to pour into the soul of any living being. Once Bob has taken control of his victim, horrible, despicable acts are usually to follow as bodies are dropped off buildings, burned, mutilated, crushed—whatever seems convenient and thorough at the time. When violence and direct confrontation prove to be a hindrance, it is not uncommon for Bob to simply use a host to blend in with the surroundings, surreptitiously moving to the next point in his mission.

Of course, Bob is not your typical messenger of God, and turning the other cheek is a disconcerting notion. When the buzzsaws and pump-action shotguns enter the picture, the cleansing soon begins. Twisted? Yes. Take one look at Shiny's conceptual art of Bob and the look of psychotic rage burning in his eyes tells you exactly where Shiny wanted to take this dark game. There has been constant boasting and speculation regarding the technology powering Messiah, but no one seems to talk about the character design: from the prostitutes to the pimps to the medics, the game's world is populated with intriguing creations.

Now that Messiah's production is nearing completion—the last of the three sprawling cities is being polished—you'll soon be able to share in Dave Perry and the gang's vision of apocalyptic madness. And let the angels sing: Messiah is coming to Dreamcast. GR







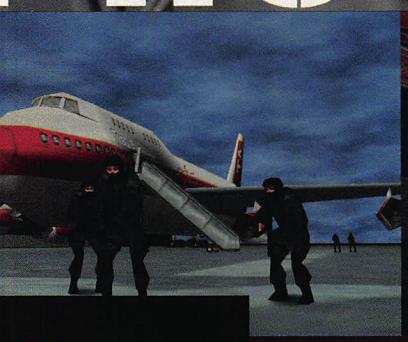


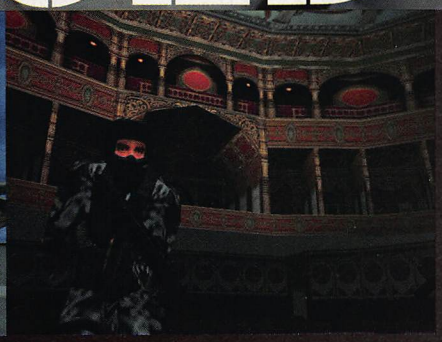


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RIDGE RACER V

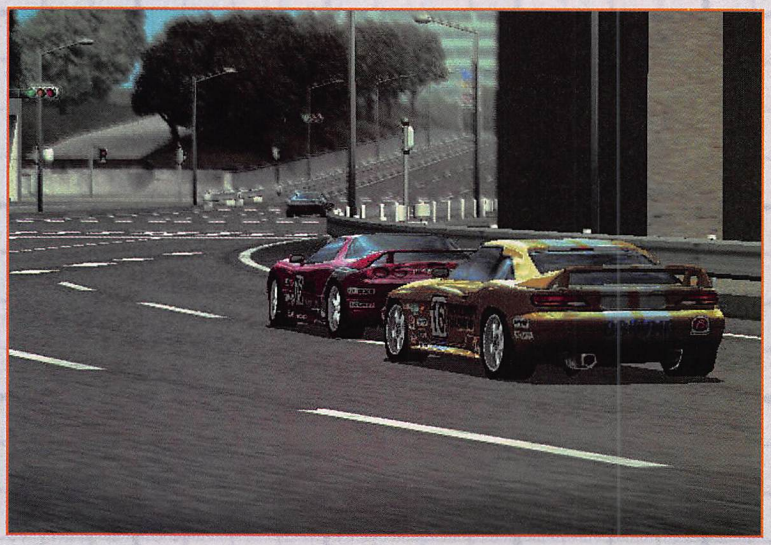
previewed by mike hobbs • developer/publisher: namco • available: march (japan)

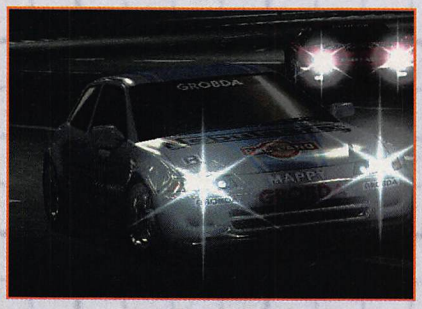
PS2

We've seen what Namco can do with 128-bit hardware. Their Dreamcast version of Soul Calibur is one of the most visually arresting games ever produced, and in a few months' time, the world will bear witness to their coding skills on Sony's new super-console, the PS2. Preliminary video from the Tokyo Game Show and this handful of recently released screens are the stuff of new hardware dreams, and we can anticipate only the best-looking racing game of all time.

For an idea of what the PS2 is capable of and what Namco is seemingly able to wring out of it on their first go, consider the fact that a detail as small as a brake caliper behind a wheel can be easily distinguished. Or that trees actually seem to have a volume to them. Or that there is real-time reflection mapping, amazing-looking specular highlighting, translucent glass, and the most realistic road-side scenery ever conceived.

The thought of Namco updating one of its most prized series, on a piece of hardware sure to eclipse everything that has come before, should make for a happy day come March 4. In the meantime, enjoy these screens and relish in anticipation. GR









ACE COMBAT 3

previewed by mike hobbs • developer/publisher: namco • available: april

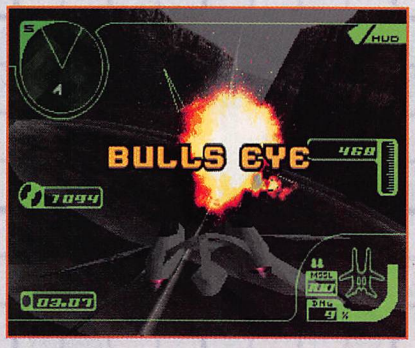
PlayStation

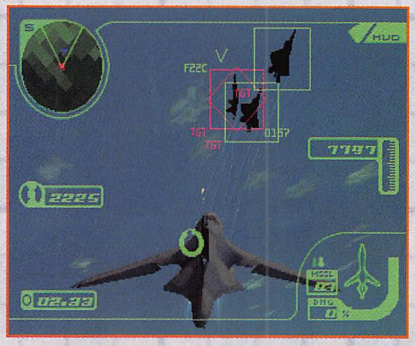
When Namco turns their attention to one of their ongoing series, the results are often astounding. Witness R4 and Soul Calibur for an idea of how seriously they take updating their games. That same devotion is being applied to Ace Combat 3, and this sequel is set to take the series into the 21st century with style.

Namco is currently in the process of editing down and translating the massive story structure present in the import version. Focus-group testing showed that most Japanese gamers simply skipped these scenes, and it was thought to be a waste of resources to localize the entire thing. I can't blame them, but I hope they leave enough in the final cut to keep it interesting.

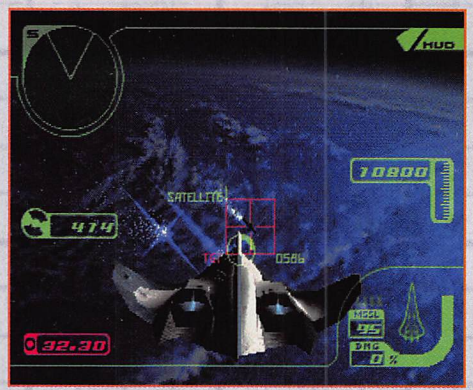
Of course, the core game will remain more or less the same, and based on the Japanese version, we can look forward to another great effort from Namco. Beautifully realized environments, a slew of real and futuristic aircraft, typically satisfying dogfighting action, and some great missions should leave Ace Combat veterans in a state of high-flying bliss.

AC 3 is slated for an April release, and we'll let you know how the story elements pan out once we receive a final edition. GR









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SOUTHPEAK™ INTERACTIVE

PERFECT DARK

previewed by pooch • developer: rare • publisher: nintendo • available: q2

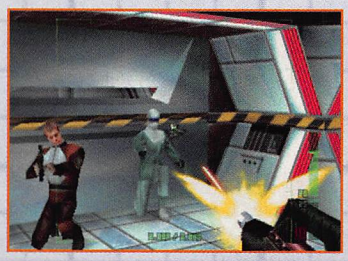
Clearly the most anticipated N64 game slated for release in the year 2000, Nintendo/Rare's Perfect Dark is the follow-up to the multi-million selling GoldenEye 007. Being created by the same team responsible for GE, the game continues to look ultra-polished, as Rare attempts to squeeze every last trick out of the aging N64 hardware. And, as these recently released screen shots show, they look to be accomplishing their objective.

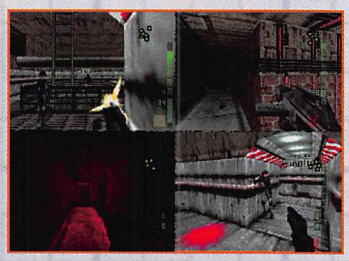
For those who don't yet know, the game takes place in the year 2023, and Perfect Dark is the codename of the game's main character, Joanna Dark. The international theme of the game will take players around the globe with plenty of twists and turns, and will put Joanna in a web of conspiracy that spans epic temporal proportions.

One of the more interesting feats that Rare is said to be accomplishing with Perfect Dark, and that will no doubt be one of the hottest trends in gaming in the next couple of years, is the ability to transfer a picture of oneself onto a face texture of one of the characters in the game. The new-face character will not be part of the actual game, but will be a playable character in the multiplayer modes.

With the massive lengths of Rare's Donkey Kong 64 and Jet Force Gemini, combined with extreme challenge posed by GoldenEye 007, one has to wonder if the game may not only exceed expectations, but overshoot them entirely. **GR**











SYPHON FILTER 2

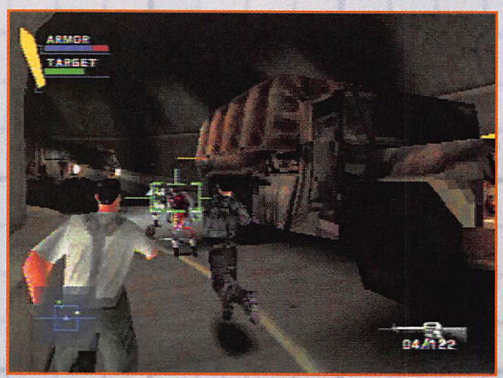
previewed by mike hobbs • developer: 989 studios • publisher: sony • available: march

The original Syphon Filter garnered almost as much praise as it did criticism for being so derivative of other games. Influences from Metal Gear, Tomb Raider, and even Goldeneye found their way into 989's action/espionage thriller, but the game was none the worse for wear, as the seemingly disparate elements came together so nicely. Consequently, the game was a hit, and now we're looking at the outcome of that resultant success, a new and improved sequel.

A new two-player split-screen mode heads up the list of new features, along with a new hand-to-hand combat system and the ability to play as Lian Xing, Gabe Logan's counterpart from the original Syphon Filter. Of course, new weapons will be on hand as well, including flame throwers, crossbows, night-vision rifles, and automatic shotguns, which should make completing the game's 20 new levels as thrilling as possible.

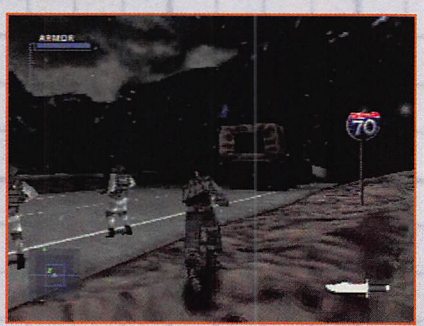
We'll bring you a hands-on report next month on this two-disc sequel. Hopefully, Syphon Filter 2 will reveal itself to be more than just an amalgam of other action games, even though that formula worked well the first time around. **GR**



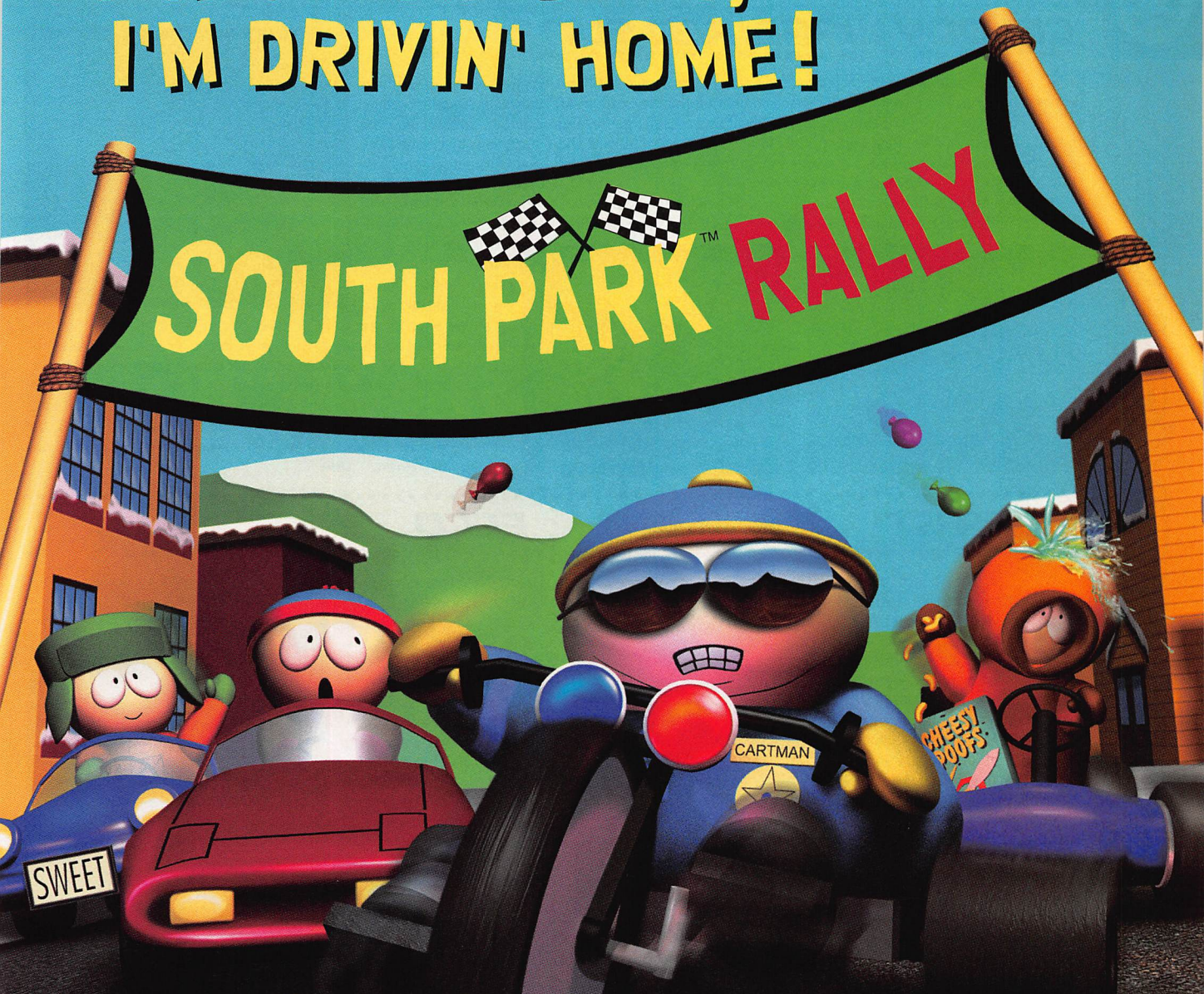








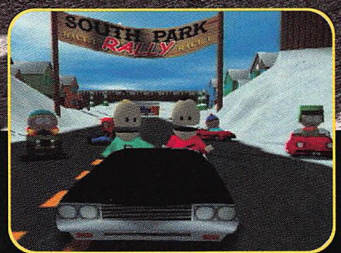
SCREW YOU GUYS, I'M DRIVIN' HOME!



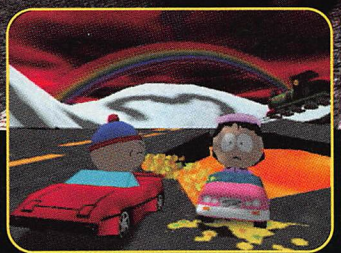
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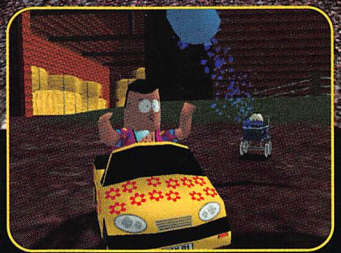
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COLONY WARS: RED SUN

previewed by mike hobbs • developer: psygnosis leeds studio • publisher: psygnosis • available: march

PlayStation

Now entering its third chapter, the Colony Wars series is still the only place to turn for quality space combat on the PlayStation. As is the case with Wipeout, Psygnosis own this particular genre, and based on a tour of this latest edition, they intend to keep it that way. The expected graphic upgrade joins a simpler, more free-form game structure that gives the game a newfound accessibility.

Having sampled both sides of the ongoing conflict within the Colony Wars universe in the first two games, this latest puts you in the shoes of Valdemar, a mercenary more interested in bounty than political ideologies. As such, you can end up allying with either side as you choose your missions: gone is the branching, performance-based structure of the previous entries, as you'll now have more control over the type of game you want to have. Of course, no matter which missions are chosen, this is a 3D shooter above all else, and the action served up in Red Sun looks to be on par with the rest of the series.







As with any sequel, the freshness of the first can be but a distant memory, and it's up to technical advancement and subtle tweaking to keep the series worthwhile. Red Sun follows this model well, but whether or not it totally succeeds as a relevant sequel will have to wait for the final review. GR

SEGA GT

previewed by mike hobbs • developer/publisher: sega • available: feb (japan)

As the launch of the PS2 draws closer, the Dreamcast's library continues to gain strength, every month revealing software of ever-increasing sophistication and graphic development. But as Sega sees it, they need games that compete on a direct level with what will be available on PS2, and in Sega GT, we are seeing a real attempt to counter the might of Gran Turismo 2000.



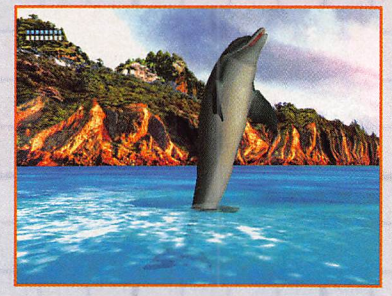


Over a hundred licensed cars in normal and Grand Touring trim populate this simulation/arcade racer, and it shamelessly attempts to offer many of the same thrills present in Gran Turismo. There's the realism of obtaining licenses to compete in the championship mode along with hyper-realistic replays and the promise of a highly developed physics engine. Sega GT is scheduled to ship in Japan late February (just in time to counter PS2), with an American release shortly thereafter. GR

ECCO

previewed by m hobbs • developer: appaloosa • publisher: sega • available: tba

These new Ecco shots for Dreamcast just made it into the issue, and if the anticipation for this potentially amazing game wasn't high enough already, expectations went through the roof when we got an eyeful of these shots. Amazing underwater graphics and a backstory by highly respected, Hugo award winning science fiction author David Brin ("Startide Rising," "The Postman") should give Ecco the visual and conceptual framework that it needs to succeed as a next-generation game. We'll be bringing you loads more on Ecco soon. GR





BLUES BROTHERS 2000

previewed by dave halverson • developer/publisher: titus • available: spring

NINTENDO64

It's a clear, crisp morning as Elwood prepares to take his first step of freedom after six years in the slammer. The suit is a bit baggier than he remembers as he straightens his tie, adjusts his hat, and slides on those famous shades. Chicago waits: hoods ready to settle old scores, pawn shops to scrounge, but most importantly, he must reunite the band in time for the Battle of the Bands!

To quote the press material: "In Blues Brothers 64, you assume the role of Elwood Blues, a man on a mission: find all of the members of the band and collect enough notes to learn each song on the set list. The more songs you learn completely, the more secrets you uncover, and the better the band becomes. Scour city streets, dredge through sewers, run from ghosts, and pounce, shove and smash to collect as much cash as possible... all to complete your mission to get the band back together!" I couldn't have said it better myself. Well, maybe I could. We'll find out once a playable version crosses our path, now won't we? GR







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PLASMA SWORD

previewed by mike hobbs • developer/publisher: capcom • available: march

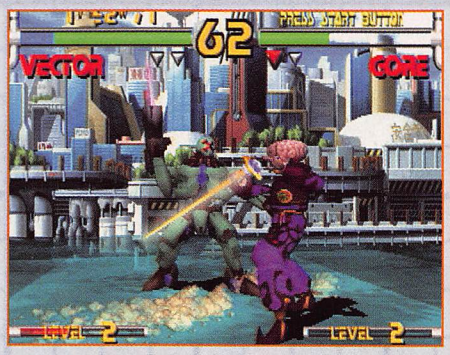
Namco set a ridiculously high standard with their Soul Calibur conversion on Dreamcast. It graphically towered over the arcade original, a fact that rendered it one of the best looking console games of all time. Unfortunately, Capcom hasn't quite taken their DC conversion of Star Gladiator 2, called Plasma Sword in the U.S., anywhere near that level, but it is something of an improvement over the arcade original. But is it enough of an improvement? Compared against Soul Calibur, Power Stone, and VF3, it is not.

With its flat backdrops and less-than-stunning character models, Plasma Sword doesn't inspire much awe in its presentation. And the game also finds Capcom pulling the cheapest of Midway-style maneuvers, with the initially impressive twenty-two character roster essentially being halved when clones are factored into the mix.

As a game, Plasma Sword also doesn't set the world on fire, but the play is at least fast, cheap, and out of control. It's not a step beyond the first Star Gladiator game on PlayStation, and those who found that game to be a bore will not be swayed by Plasma Sword.

This is supposed to be a preview of the forthcoming American version, but our time with the just-released Japanese version was a bit of a disappointment. Unless changes are made (unlikely), Plasma Sword will be outclassed before it ever leaves the gates. GR







GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

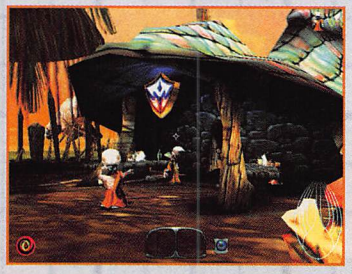
previewed by tom stratton • developer: planet moon • publisher: interplay • available: q2

It has taken a bit longer than we had hoped, but with all the attention to detail in creating the environments and its inhabitants, it looks like the wait will be worth it. The three different species haven't changed. Kabuto, of course, is still the breadwinner of the bunch, with the advanced Meccaryns still around, and finally the seductive Sea Reapers. Each excels in certain terrain: Kabuto can only traverse land, the Meccaryns govern the air, and the Sea Reapers control the sea.

Since we haven't actually had the pleasure of playing the game yet, we can only say that the story and game objectives sound extremely compelling. The character designs are refreshing and the color schemes are unique and easy on the eyes. Everything about the game is inventive and bright. To categorize this game would do it a disservice. There is no doubt its release will be a gaming event to remember. GR







BALDUR'S GATE II: SHADOWS OF AMN

previewed by j.r. haugen • developer: bioware • publisher: interplay • available: fall

The original Baldur's Gate was such an astounding and engrossing role-playing experience that it is no surprise a sequel is on its way. Those who played the first enjoyed what made it good, like the immersing plot broken up into chapters, beautiful 3D spell effects, photo-realistic character portraits, and the backdrop of Forgotten Realms, the most popular Advanced Dungeons & Dragons campaign setting. This is all returning for the next one, with some pretty cool embellishments. In addition to an AI improvement, new classes, items, and spells, you can import your own portraits and digitized speech. The frames of animation have more than doubled as well, not including environmental animations. Bioware has altered the balance in quests, so there will not be so many retrieval missions. And of course, Baldur's Gate II will feature a multiplayer mode that captures the feeling of old-school pen-and-paper role-playing. Nothing in this world is certain, but it is almost a given that Baldur's Gate II will be extraordinary. GR



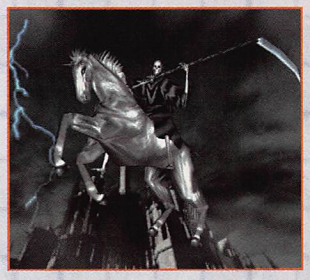


CASTLEVANIA RESURRECTION

previewed by d. halverson • developer/publisher: konami • available: q2 2000

The fact they we proclaimed both N64 versions of Castlevania as the letdown of the year only shows our undying love and devotion to the institution. We are holding a vigil for Castlevania Resurrection, praying that it will resurrect the franchise. While a wholly 2D version, utilizing the PS2 or DC's new technology (which we can only imagine applied to a 2D universe) is what we really want, the latest word on Resurrection is reason to celebrate. Currently many of the legendary nuances that weren't in the 64 game are now being implemented, and hopefully there won't be such horrors as the skeletons riding motorcycles. Throw in some Medusa heads, a whip, and bolt some candles to the walls and we'll be on the highway to hell. **GR**







TEAM BUDDIES

previewed by mike hobbs • developer/publisher: psygnosis • available: march

And now for something completely different. Team Buddies (tentative title) from Psygnosis is a four-player action/strategy game that combines cute visuals and a nasty destructive streak.

The idea behind the game is quite simple. By stacking little colored blocks, you can make different types of troops, weapons, and vehicles with which to annihilate your opponent(s). Gameplay ranges from straightforward attacking and base capturing to more amusing fare like Capture the Pig and Bomb-Ball, a kind of destructive soccer.

Mad, multiplayer fun is the goal of Team Buddies, and it's nice to see Psygnosis doing something other than their typically dark and serious style of game. Look for it in March. **GR**

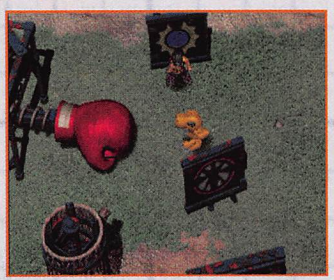




DIGIMON

previewed by dave halverson • developer/publisher: bandai • available: q2

And you thought Pokémon was weird... What I like to term as Pokémon for kids over 10, Bandai's Digimon sports more sophisticated character designs and, in my opinion, a much more intriguing overall universe. The game, like the show, covers the exploits of seven kids who are sucked through a vortex into a place called Digiworld, just as our world falls prey to all manner of wrath-of-God-like apocalyptic disasters. The game features impressive polygonal models and a vast array of fantastical inhabitants to interact with as you and your Digital Monster (each kid gets one suited to his or her personality) travel the land, training and fighting in real-time, one-on-one battles. Hey, all I know is that my little mini-rex pooped in real time, and it stayed where it was laid, indefinitely. Now that's detail. As soon as we receive a localized version we'll bring you lots more on Bandai's latest virtual pet epic. In the meantime you can check out the show on Fox Kids (see local listings). **GR**







4 WHEEL THUNDER

previewed by b. fiechter • developer: midway publisher: kalisto • available: may

4 Wheel Thunder is the latest Midway game to enter into its successful realm of extreme sports titles. Developed by Kalisto, whose past effort was the brooding Nightmare Creatures, this offroad racer sports 12 tracks winding through both indoor and outdoor areas, ranging from small, narrow courses to huge, open expanses. Monster trucks, buggies, jeeps, and quads will be available to race in, each with independent suspensions. **GR**







フィアエフェクト

fear effect chapter one

AN INTERVIEW WITH STAN LIU

CEO AND PRESIDENT OF KRONOS DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT

Gamers' Republic: Is Fear Effect a Kronos original concept?
Kronos: Yes. It is a concept that the president had for a long time. It's based on a lot of old stories in Chinese legends that he grew up with. We thought it would be interesting to see what the story would be like if we tried to clash traditional western beliefs with some old Eastern folklores.

GR: What inspired the design and look of Fear Effect? How long has the game been in development?
Kronos: Most of the people at Kronos love anime and comic books and we haven't really seen that type of style executed properly in a game before. We wanted to take a shot at translating that unique style and flavor for the game market. The game has been in development for almost two years. It has gone through three to four iterations in visual design concepts.

GR: How big is the Fear Effect Team?
Kronos: At its height, we had about 35 people working on the project.

GR: What are some of their earlier efforts?
Kronos: Parasite Eve, Cardinal Syn, Meat Puppet, Dark Rift, Phantasmagoria, NFL Game Day, and Bug!.

GR: How are you balancing the gameplay between action and puzzle? Where is the greatest emphasis?
Kronos: Action and puzzle are equally important in this game. They are tools that we used to guide the player through this adventure we call Fear Effect. And the greatest emphasis for us is the story itself and the emotional experience you get along the way.

GR: The use of prerendered backgrounds obviously allows you much greater freedom with the polygonal elements. How are you taking advantage of this and integrating the two?
Kronos: Due to the motion FX technology that we are using for the game, it is actually much harder to integrate the prerendered backgrounds with the real-time polygon elements. What it does give us is seamless integration of gameplay and storytelling. Motion FX gives us a world that is alive and dynamic. Traditional prerendered backgrounds are motionless and stale. We wanted to stay away from that as much as possible.

GR: With such a dark sci-fi ambience, I imagine the music is paramount in the game's fruition. Who's producing the soundtrack?
Kronos: We are producing all the audio effects and soundtrack in-house. Because the game is a clash of Western and Eastern cultures, the music must reflect that. In specific areas, we strategically removed the music and used only background ambience sound to evoke tension and fear.

GR: What's your target audience for Fear Effect?
Kronos: We are definitely targeting a more mature audience due to the content and subject matter that are in the game. However, in general we hope to attract people that are interested in experiencing a good story and are drawn to the anime art style.

GR: How long a game is it for an intermediate gamer the first time through?
Kronos: We are hoping that for an intermediate gamer it would be a 25-30 hours of gameplay experience.

GR: Once the game is beaten will there be hidden elements to make a second pass worthwhile?
Kronos: Yes, there are five distinctive endings. They are all based on decisions and actions that you take during gameplay.

GR: Does the game have many elements of surprise? How much is comprised of cinemas?
Kronos: The game is all about the element of surprise. As the story goes, the player is led to believe that they are in for a simple rescue and retrieve experience. However, as the story unfolds, the world is thrown upside down and everything that seemed normal is all of a sudden strange and unusual. For those of you who are familiar with the movie *From Dusk Till Dawn*, it's that kind of thing.

GR: What about Dreamcast? Have you given any thought to a DC version or DC development in general? Sega already has an installed base of over a million and they're likely largely enthusiast based...
Kronos: We are looking into branching out into different platforms. PC and Dreamcast are certainly viable interests.

GR: On the same note, we're playing Resident Evil 2 for the N64, which is similar in design to Fear Effect, and the game looks a lot better. Why not release it on the 64 with juiced polygon counts?
Kronos: Currently, in order for us to effectively tell the story of Fear Effect, it requires us to use four CDs to hold all the contents that we created. That is equivalent to 2 1/2 hours worth of 3D animation. I can only imagine that our next game would require us to up that requirement.



Unless Nintendo is going to release a DVD version of its console, we don't see how it would be possible to port our game over to the N64.

GR: Is there anything you'd like to emphasize to our readers about Fear Effect?
Kronos: Yes, Fear Effect is a directed experience. Much like watching a great film, at the end of the movie, you will never hear the audience say things like, "Did you see how many zombies he killed?" or "He solved twelve puzzles in three hours!" You'll hear them say things like, "That sequence scared the heck out of me!" Or, "It was so funny that I almost peed in my pants." That's what we are after. We want to take the player on this emotional ride that we call Fear Effect. However, rest assured that there will be plenty of action and deep gameplay. GR

GR: If Fear Effect finds the audience that it should, will we see merchandising, sequels etc.?
Kronos: Yes, absolutely. We have plans to do a prequel that introduces how the three leading characters became a team.

GR: Will you guys move directly to PS2 after this?
Kronos: Currently that is the plan.

Gamers' Republic Reviews



Games Reviewed This Issue

Domestic Reviews

Colin McRae Rally PS	B
Crazy Taxi DC	A-
Elemental Gimmick Gear DC	B
F-1 World Grand Prix DC	A-
Fighting Force 2 DC	C-
Fighting Force 2 PS	D-
Front Mission 3 DC	B
Gran Turismo 2 PS	A
Hype: The Time Quest PC	A
Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster PS	B
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver DC	A-
Mario Party 2 N64	B+
Pokémon Stadium N64	C+
Quake 3 PC	A-
Resident Evil 2 N64	A-
Ridge Racer 64 N64	B
Roadsters N64	C+
Shadow Man DC	B
Tarzan N64	C+
Test Drive 6 DC	C-
Tomb Raider 4 PS	B
Tomba! 2 PS	B+
Toy Story 2 PS	B-
V-8 Second Offense DC/N64/PS	B
V.O.O.T. DC	A-
Wheel of Time PC	A-
Wild Metal Country DC	B
Worms: Armeggedon DC	B+
Zombie Revenge DC	C-

Import Reviews

Biohazard 2	A-
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure	B-
Street Fighter EX2	C+
Valkyrie Profile	B

Sports Reviews

Wrestlemania 2000	B+

Handheld Reviews

Bionic Commando	A-
Rayman	A-
SNK vs. Capcom: Card Clash	A-
SNK vs. Capcom: Match of the Millennium	A
Sonic the Hedgehog Pocket Adventure	B

1. Games marked in RED are highly recommended for your gaming collection.
2. Games marked in YELLOW should be avoided completely.

[Subject to the reviewer's personal preferences, it can be generally accepted that any game scoring a B or higher is a great way to spend your day. Games scoring a low D or F should be microwaved for three seconds and returned.]

Gamers' Republic Review System

A+ **A** **A-** **B+** **B** **B-** **C+** **C** **C-** **D+** **D** **D-** **F**

[A+ to A] Games in this bracket are the best of the best. They feature the highest quality visual presentation, and are excellent in both initial and long term playability. The very best video game of its type, worthy of every gamer's undivided attention. *Example: Gran Turismo 2*

[A- to B] Excellent, solid, and highly playable pieces of software, although they lack minor polish to become truly outstanding. Slight frame rate problems, a marginally disappointing ending or any number of small quirks may take an otherwise exalted release down a notch. *Example: Crazy Taxi*

[B- to C] Games in this bracket are generally very good, but may have one or more flaws. A game receiving a B- may be a great game that's just too short or has irritating music, while a C may have these same problems plus a couple more. Very good to average entertainment. *Example: Toy Story 2*

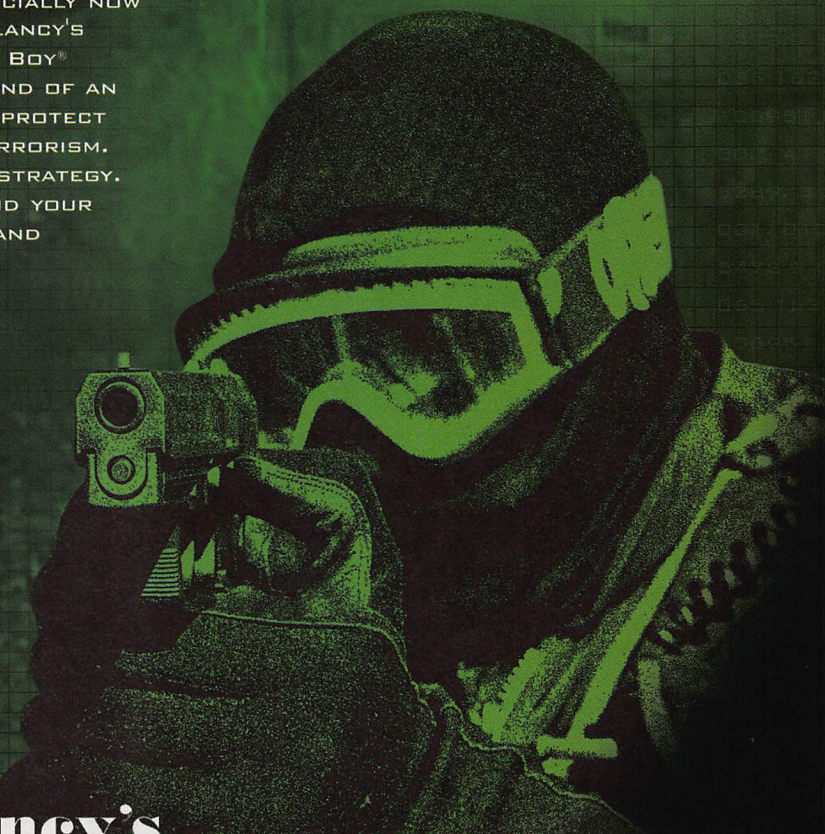
[C- to D] Games in this bracket require serious help in two or more areas. Perhaps the control responds horribly and the characters animate poorly. Although a game of this caliber may have had a great initial concept, it was never fully realized in the final stages of design. *Example: Zombie Revenge*

[D- to F] Very rarely will you come across a game of this lack of quality. A complete dearth of vision, a determination to remove any semblance of gameplay or fun, and particular attention made to use none of the most rudimentary of the system's proprietary tools. *Example: Fighting Force 2 (PS)*

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- SNIPER MODE TO PICK OFF ENEMIES AT A SAFE DISTANCE.



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ALSO ON NINTENDO 64



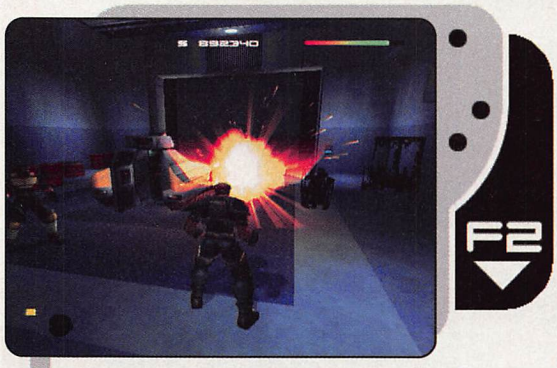
TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Red Storm ENTERTAINMENT

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FIGHTING FORCE 2

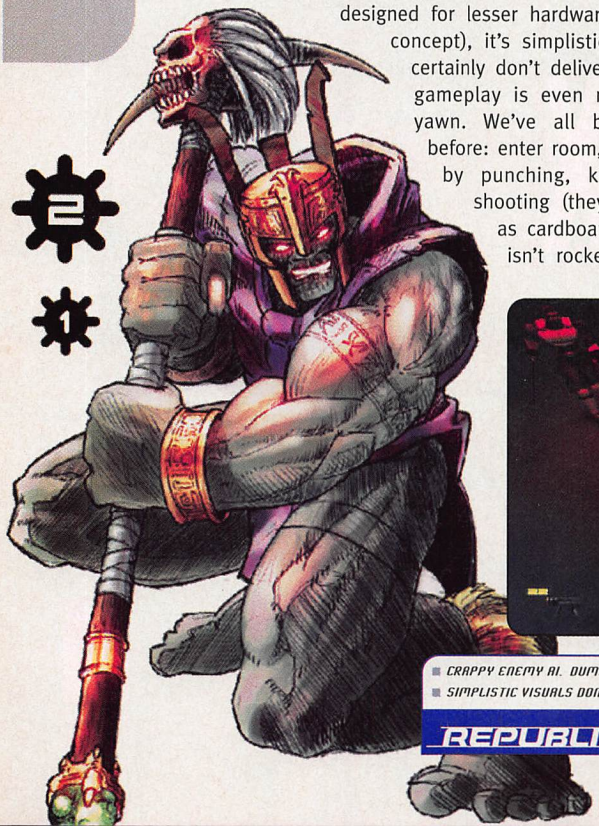
BY DAVE HALVERSON





Core delivers an insignificant sequel to their worst Gaming by the numbers comes to the Dreamcast

As I trudge through the Dreamcast version of Fighting Force 2, pondering why Core made a sequel to their worst game in the first place, I am saddened more by thoughts of the past than I am by the fact that I have to play this robotic, gaming-by-the-numbers beat-'em and shoot-'em-up. What happened to the Core that I once knew and loved, creators of such magic as Wonderdog, Chuck Rock, Son of Chuck, Skeleton Krew, and Bubba 'n Stix? Core was truly a creative force in the eighties, steadily providing Sega hardware with some of its greatest games. Nowadays, however, anything other than Lara Croft seems to get less than their full attention, and damn it, it's just not fair. If having one huge mega-star in their lineup means stifling their creativity otherwise, then I think it's time to give Lara some much-needed R&R. That said, I will now quickly summarize what FF2 brings to the Dreamcast lineup...and it ain't much. A port of a game designed for lesser hardware (what a concept), it's simplistic graphics certainly don't deliver, and the gameplay is even more of a yawn. We've all been here before: enter room, kill thugs by punching, kicking, or shooting (they're stupid as cardboard, so this isn't rocket science) and if one of them doesn't drop the colored key you need to open the next door, start breaking stuff. The bad guys love to leave wooden crates all over their hi-tech cyborg breedin' complex, so kick them until they explode (everything explodes—chairs, soda machines, all of it) find the pass key and open whatever door you couldn't before. Next, be sure to pick up the weapons they drop and the many axes, grenades, night-sticks, etc., that they keep hidden in giant low tech computer consoles! Now, fight more enemies, occasionally snipe a few and proceed. Aside from a few maze-oriented puzzles and sub-par jumping stints, this is Fighting Force 2. Once in awhile you'll encounter a cool scenario or have to solve a minor puzzle, and the cut scenes are mildly entertaining, but for a company with Core's reputation, this is pure drivel. The fact that this game's designer has a job should give new hope to budding game designers everywhere. GR











- CRAPPY ENEMY AI. DUMB AS A ROCK
- SIMPLISTIC VISUALS DON'T LOOK DC
- GAMING BY THE NUMBERS A YAWN
- BETTER THAN A POKE IN THE EYE

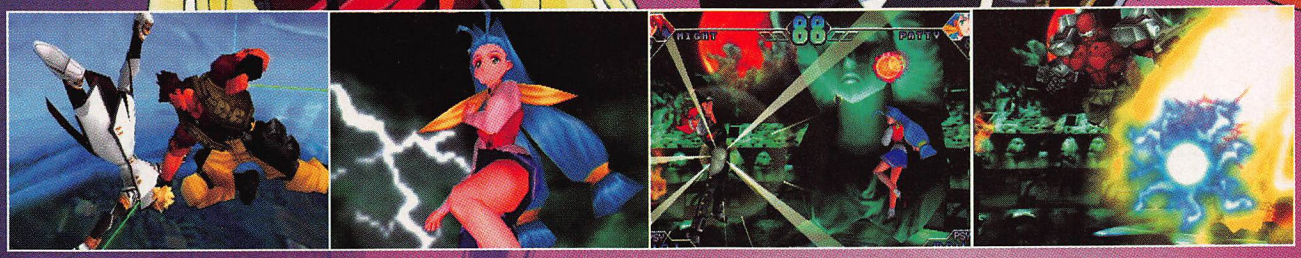
REPUBLIC SAYS... THIS GARDEN-VARIETY ACTION GAME SHOULD BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS. IT REALLY DOESN'T DELIVER IN ANY WAY AND THERE ARE FAR BETTER ACTION GAMES FOR THE SYSTEM.

C-

PSYCHIC FORCE 2012

A BEATING OF THE MINDS!

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360 DEGREES OF MIND-BLOWING FURY

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Sega Dreamcast.

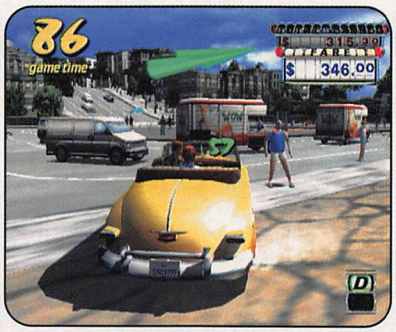
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CRAZY TAXI

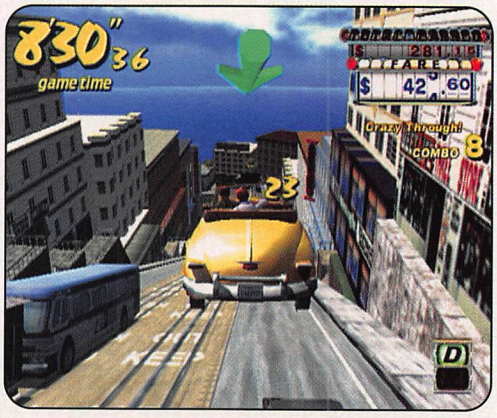
BY DAVE SMITH











When AM3 puts the hammer down, shit happens. An original arcade racer with guts and style

They used to make games like this in America, you know. Back in the day, Midway and Atari created bona fide arcade classics, games like Paperboy and 720°, games we still get a kick out of today. Now, in the age of four San Francisco Rushes, I wonder what's happened.

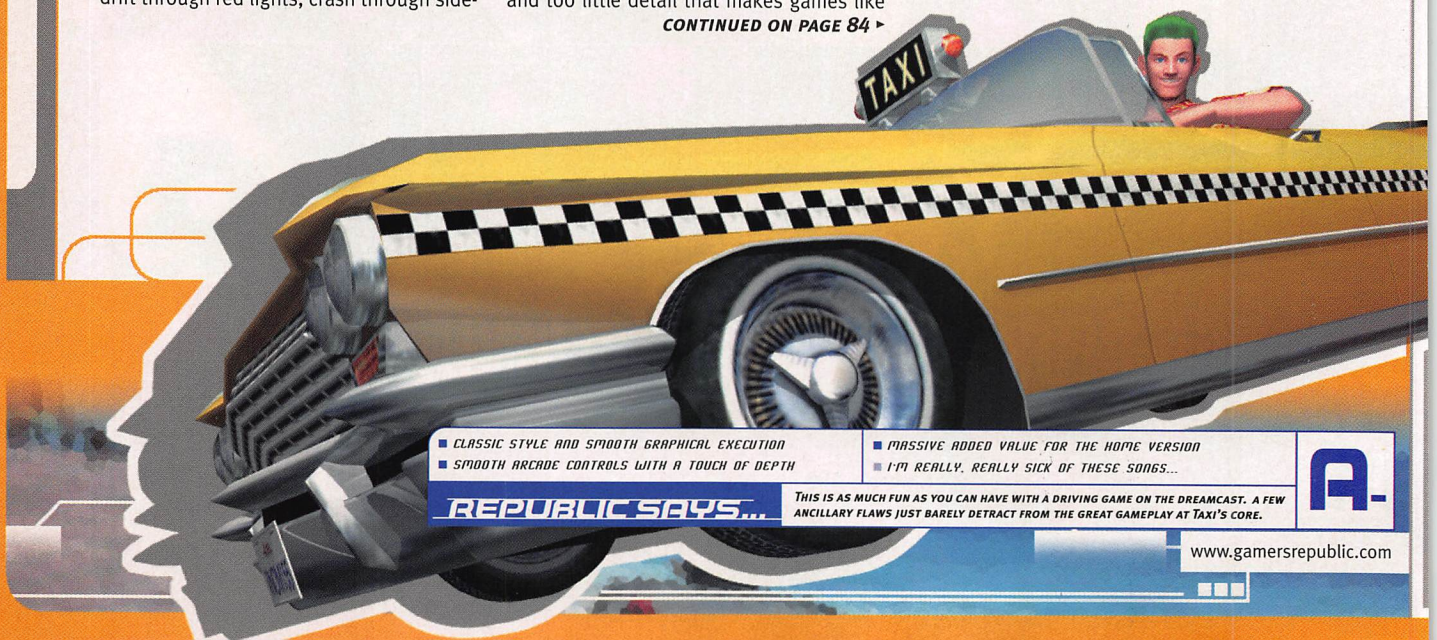
Every so often, though, something like Crazy Taxi arrives to remind me that innovation still lives in the minds of arcade developers—most often, those of Sega's AM R&D. Taxi has the ingenious premise, tight control, and sharp visual style that made us love those arcade games of old.

Placing you in the role of a downtown cab driver, picking up fares and delivering them to a multitude of destinations, Crazy Taxi is one of the fastest, most unfettered driving experiences ever devised. It's completely nonlinear; strike me dead for cliché abuse, but you really can go anywhere, and I haven't found anything the game won't let you do. You can sail over drawbridge gaps, drift through red lights, crash through sidewalk cafes, drive on the wrong side of the road, and get bonus points for the lot. A deft blend of insanity and skill will rack up the big tip combos; spend some time in the fun tutorial mode to learn the finer points.

I'm amazed by my first taste of Shenmue, but I'm just as impressed by Crazy Taxi's replication of an urban environment. While AM2 went for precision and detail, AM3's goal was variety and speed, which they've achieved in spades, creating two huge cities full of awesome sights to see. The brand new Dreamcast level is where the meat of the game lies; it's many times larger than the arcade city, and features sights like the Marine Museum's massive whale sculpture and the imposing Millennium Tower.

All through these areas, the developers have managed to strike a perfect balance between texture detail and polygonal smoothness. Neither the cars nor the scenery suffer from the blend of too much and too little detail that makes games like

CONTINUED ON PAGE 84 ▸



- CLASSIC STYLE AND SMOOTH GRAPHICAL EXECUTION
- SMOOTH ARCADE CONTROLS WITH A TOUCH OF DEPTH
- MASSIVE ADDED VALUE FOR THE HOME VERSION
- I'M REALLY, REALLY SICK OF THESE SONGS...

REPUBLIC SAYS... THIS IS AS MUCH FUN AS YOU CAN HAVE WITH A DRIVING GAME ON THE DREAMCAST. A FEW ANCILLARY FLAWS JUST BARELY DETRACT FROM THE GREAT GAMEPLAY AT TAXI'S CORE.

A-

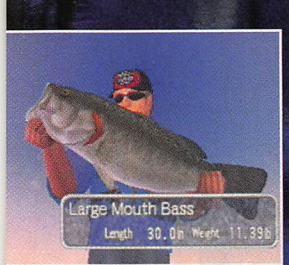
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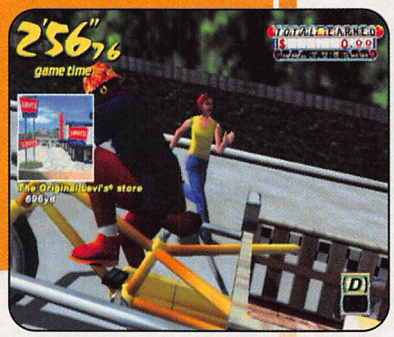
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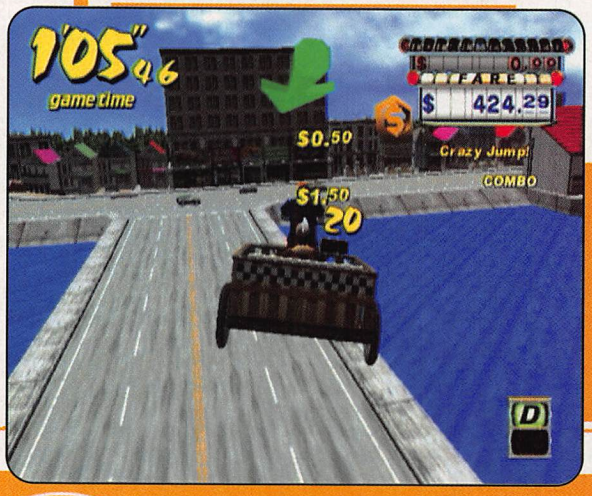
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Maken X and Vigilante 8 look so peculiar. Instead, Crazy Taxi creates a clean, colorful world that speeds past you at a constant 60 frames, even though it bursts with motion, life, and interactivity. This game is a great feat of skill, conceptualization, and restraint in graphical design, except for the abominable American cover art.

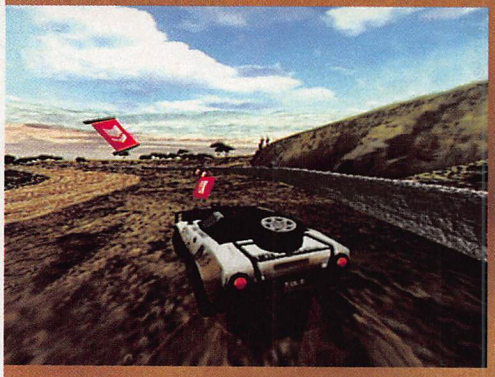
Sega could have used a little less restraint when licensing the soundtrack, though. Despite all that GD-ROM storage space, it's scored only with the four punk tracks from the arcade version, which wear out their welcome pretty quickly ("Them and Us" was my favorite track off *The Gray Race*, but even favorites wear out their welcome after half a dozen repeats in one game session). No big deal, though. Kill the music volume, pop in a copy of "Against the Grain," and get ready for an exhilarating ride. **GR**



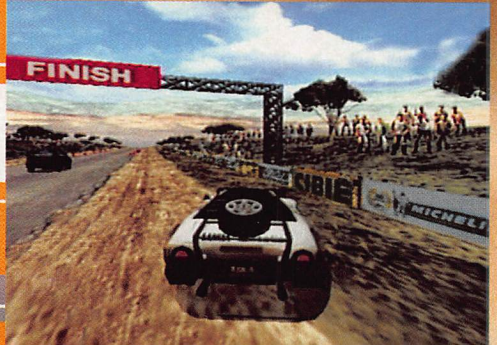










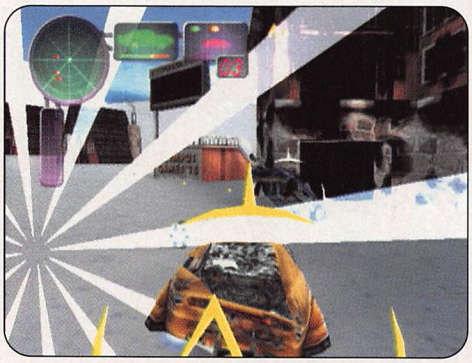


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VIGILANTE 8 SECOND OFFENSE

BY MIKE GRIFFIN

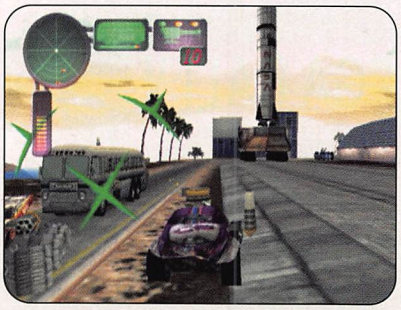




As far as developers go, Luxoflux is fairly young. And yet they're responsible for one of the best-selling, most highly anticipated, and superbly marketed action series currently available across all major game platforms. Vigilante 8: Second Offense is clearly the best vehicular combat game available to home consoles at the moment, brandishing a powerful formula of refined weapon and targeting systems, robust and pleasing 3D design, and a unique task-based gameplay system to compliment a fine assortment of intense multiplayer modes. Given the relatively short amount of time since the release of the original V8, Luxoflux surprises again by crushing the competition in the genre—including, without a doubt, the lackluster Twisted Metal 4.

All three versions of V8: Second Offense are extremely close approximations of one another—pretty much identical in terms of gameplay—and technically they perform almost precisely as one might expect, pushing the strengths (and suffering through weaknesses) of each respective hardware configuration. The N64 version takes third place, humbly bowing to the PS version's sublime gameplay finesse and the Dreamcast's inexorable visual gusto. Regardless, this version faithfully propagates vicious auto-combat action, superior customizable options, and a unique selection of weapons, upgrades, vehicles, and highly varied environments.

Luxoflux and Activision have crafted a solid N64 sequel, marred only by its pornographic soundtrack and varying split-screen fps. Fans of the original Vigilante 8 should already be guilty of acquiring their Second Offense, while N64 action fans (in general) looking for a fun and replayable experience will not be disappointed with this superior effort. GR









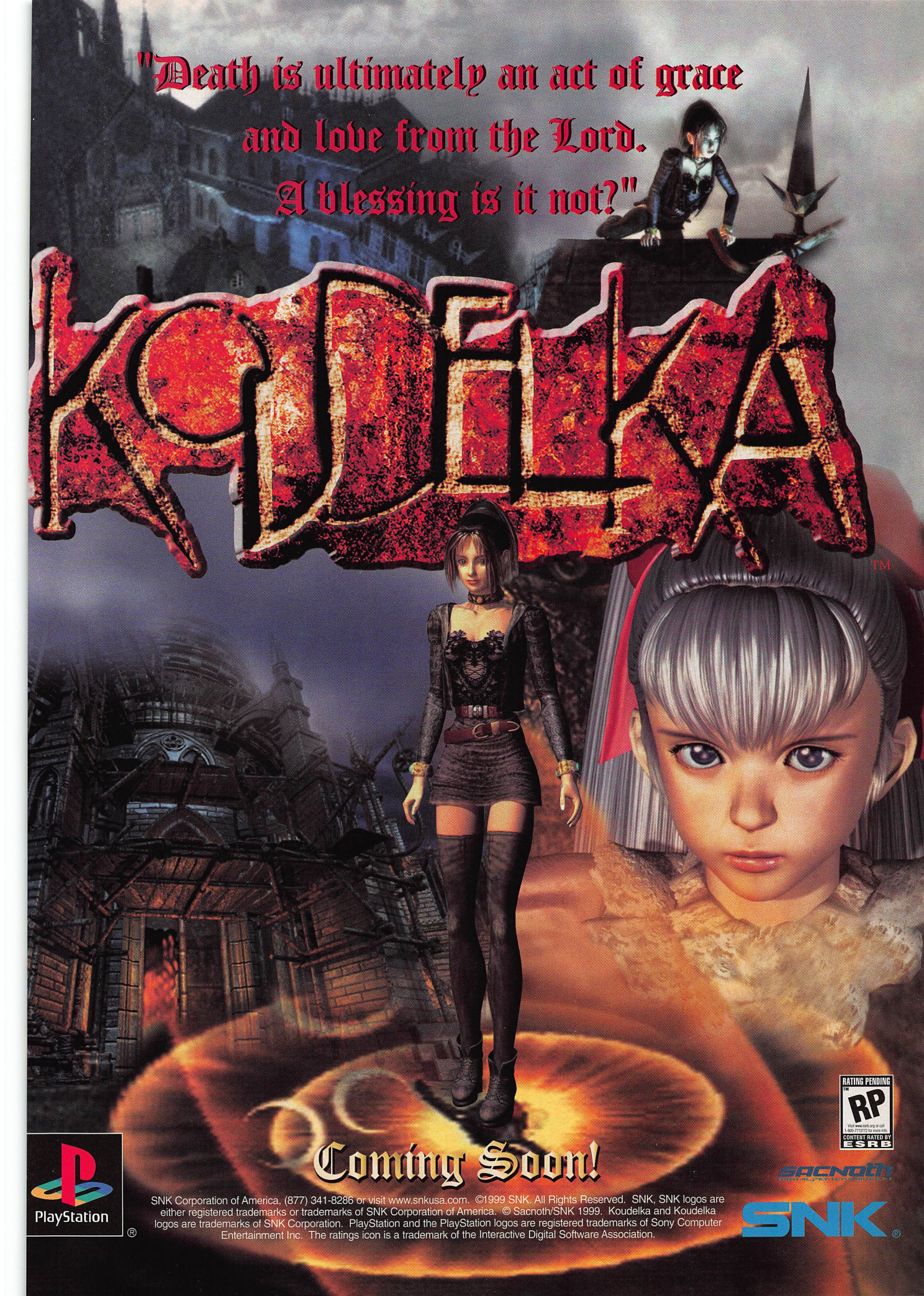


- THE DREAMCAST VERSION IS THE VISUAL TOPS
- THE PLAYSTATION HOSTS THE SMOOTHEST GAMEPLAY
- FINE WEAPONS AND MULTIPLAYER MODES ALL AROUND
- THE N64 IS HURT BY WEAK SOUND AND FRAMERATE

REPUBLIC SAYS... EACH VERSION HAS ITS OWN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, BUT FANS OF ANY PLATFORM SHOULDN'T BE DISAPPOINTED; THIS IS A FINE SECOND EFFORT BY LUXOFLUX.

B*

*score refers to all three versions of the game


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and love from the Lord.
A blessing is it not?"
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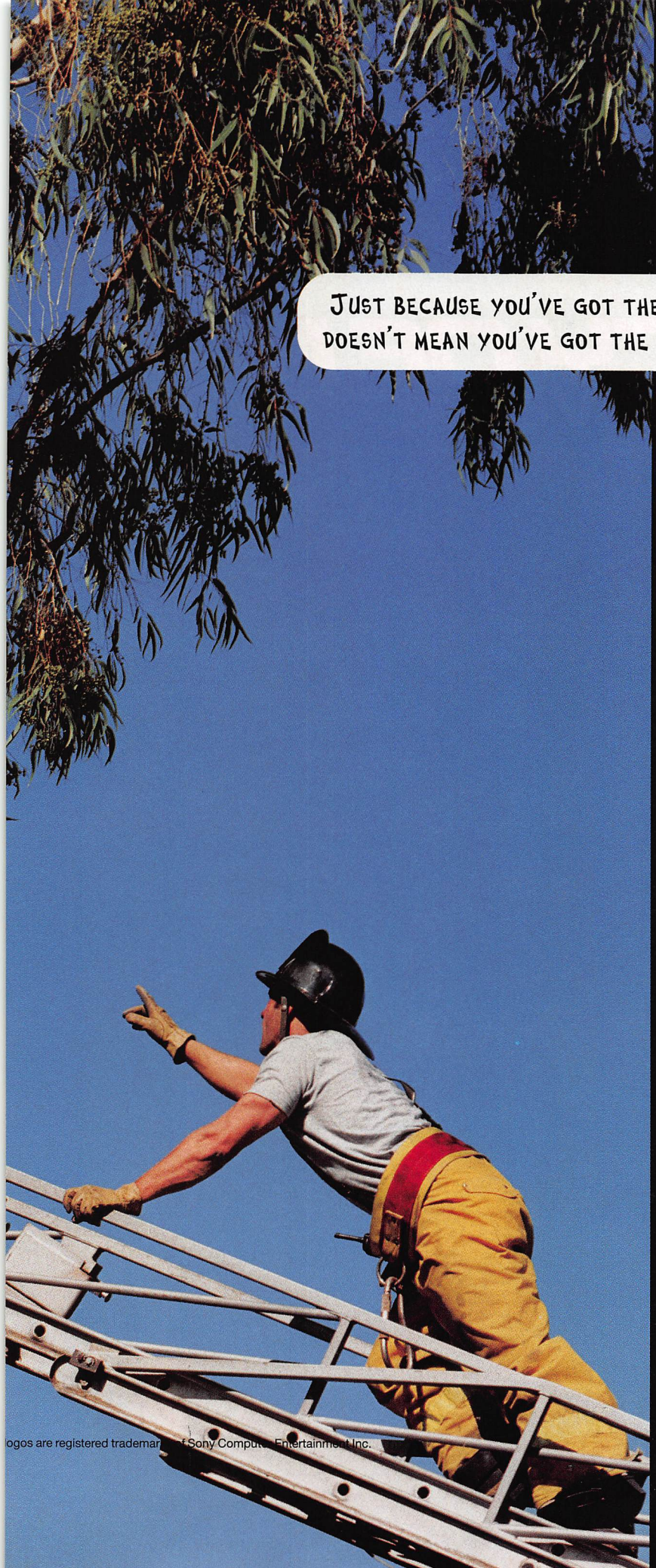


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LEGACY OF KAIN SOUL REAVER

BY BRADY FIECHTER

My favorite video games are those that effortlessly sweep me into their worlds. Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain, whatever its faults, did so with visual intrigue, fantastic atmosphere and compelling settings, and one of the most involving and intelligently written stories in a video game. The game's sequel, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, draws its strength from many of these same qualities.

On the story level, Soul Reaver is hugely entertaining, a rare achievement on its level of sophistication. While not nearly as detailed and sprawling as Blood Omen—the game is much shorter—Soul Reaver weaves its dark tale through multiple points in the game, superbly voiced in real-time cut scenes.

Soul Reaver begins with an amazing CG cinema, showing Kain, the vampire protagonist in Blood Omen, ruling as a god over Nosgoth. Kain has become defiant in his rule, and his thirst for unimaginable power has driven him to create a clan to join him. The firstborn of his followers was Raziel, who eventually evolved past his master with the formation of wings. Invoking Kain's wrath, Raziel was thrown into a great abyss where his body was to rot for eternity. Eventually Raziel was reborn by an elder, given a chance for retribution against the being who sent him to his death.

And so Soul Reaver begins, the decayed Raziel leaving vampiric form for a body nourished by souls of the inhabitants of Nosgoth. The magnificently designed character begins his quest for Kain with only claws as a weapon, but enemies can also be burned or impaled with the stakes and torches that adorn the walls and lie scattered on the ground. When an enemy is killed, its body will release a soul, which Raziel devours in his maw. The method of driving stakes through enemies and waiting to capture their souls is a part of Soul Reaver that is continually thrilling.

As an immortal being, the closest Raziel comes to death is descent into the Spectral Realm when his life force is severely depleted. It is here where the dead of Nosgoth



The worthy sequel to the dark action/RPG Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain draws its strength from mood and puzzle solving





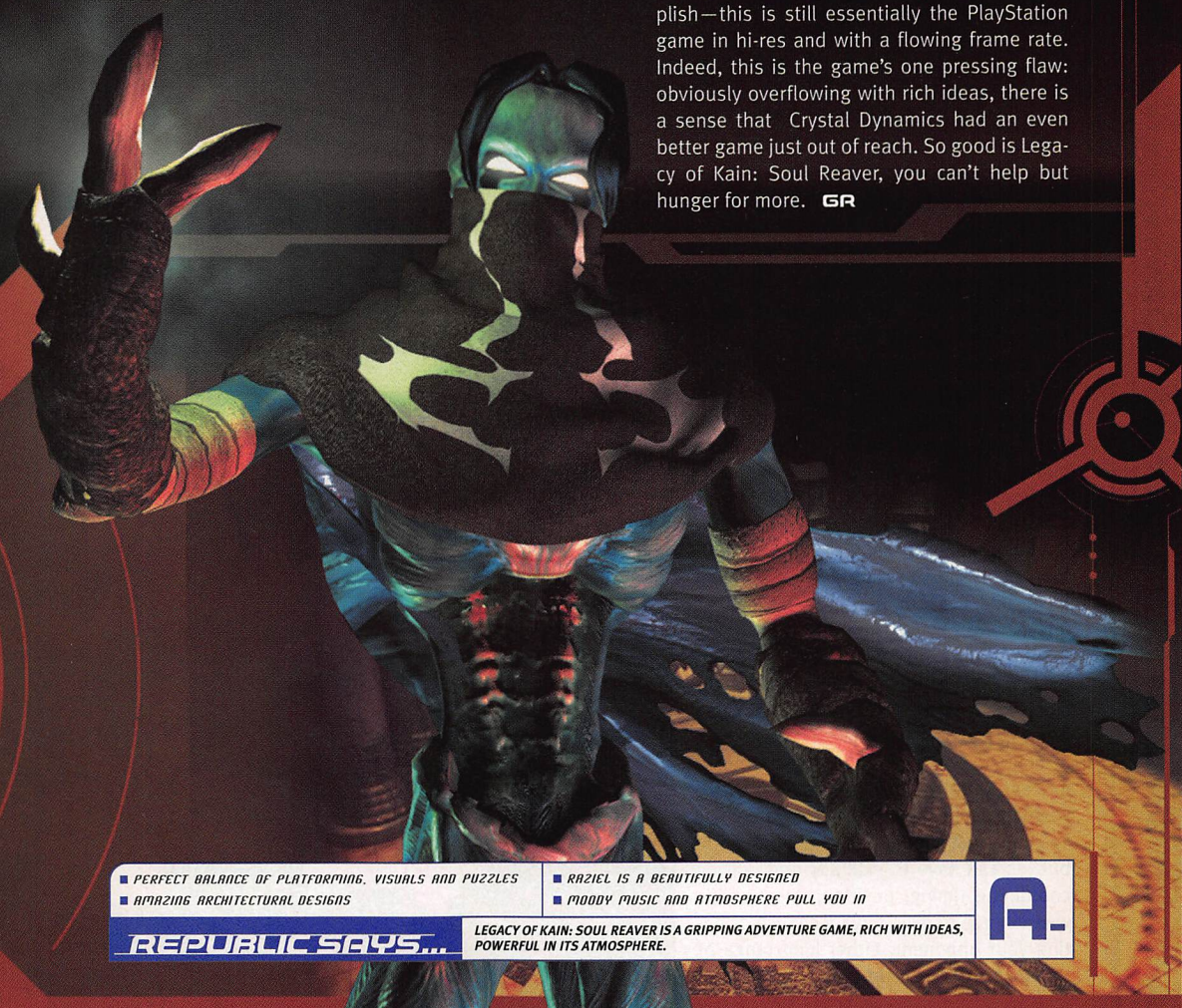


roam, a place of shadowy, twisted ruin. The Spectral Realm can also be entered into at will, and often the manipulation of environment in this alternate plane offers passage to otherwise unreachable points. Because objects can't be moved and doors opened in the Spectral Realm, once replenished with souls, Raziel must move back to the Material World, the reality that sustains physical interaction in Nosgoth.

In his search for Kain, Raziel must cross paths with several of his brethren, their deaths imbuing him with special abilities such as tolerance to water and strength to climb walls. In addition to several glyphs that can be found for added magical force, an early confrontation with Kain will reveal the incredible Soul Reaver, a brilliant arcane sword that fractures an enemy down to its soul.

What makes Soul Reaver such an involving game is that it draws from several gameplay elements, and presents them all superbly. There's constant platforming, highlighted by Raziel's ability to glide across chasms, onto rooftops, from ledge to ledge, pillar to pillar. There are the intense enemy confrontations, some marked by fierce action, others requiring you to think of indirect ways to victory. And perhaps the biggest surprise of this adventure game is the numerous unique puzzles, underpinned by the ability to flip blocks and move in and out of the two separate planes of existence.

Soul Reaver is also absorbing in its dark atmosphere. A pervasive sense of decay swallows the gloomy, vaporous settings, and striking architecture creates a world that is beyond what we are accustomed to seeing in a video game. The Soul Reaver designers were of course limited to what they could accomplish—this is still essentially the PlayStation game in hi-res and with a flowing frame rate. Indeed, this is the game's one pressing flaw: obviously overflowing with rich ideas, there is a sense that Crystal Dynamics had an even better game just out of reach. So good is Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, you can't help but hunger for more. **GR**



- PERFECT BALANCE OF PLATFORMING, VISUALS AND PUZZLES
- AMAZING ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS
- RAZIEL IS A BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED
- MOODY MUSIC AND ATMOSPHERE PULL YOU IN

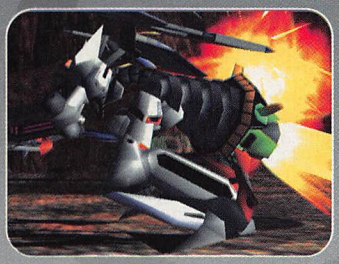
REPUBLIC SAYS... LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER IS A GRIPPING ADVENTURE GAME, RICH WITH IDEAS, POWERFUL IN ITS ATMOSPHERE.

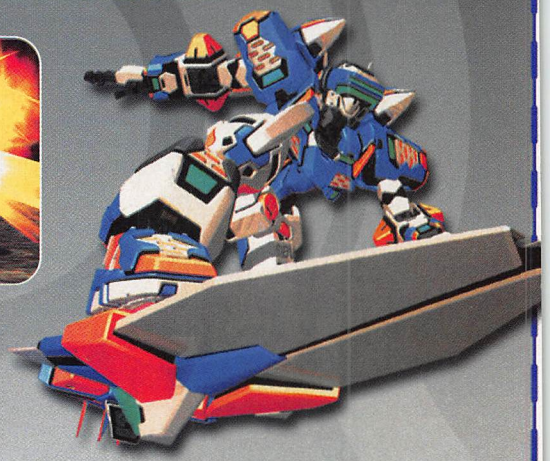
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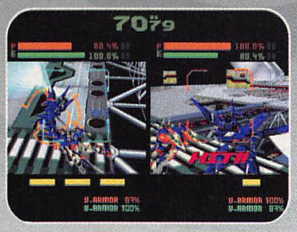
VIRTUAL ON ORATORIO TANGRAM

BY MIKE HOBBS













As good as Nintendo is at designing console games, it could be said that Sega is almost equally good when designing arcade games; they specialize in the kind of frenetic, heightened sensory experiences designed to suck quarter after quarter. And for the most part, Sega has been equally adept at adapting those games to their home consoles. They squeezed VF 2 onto the Saturn at a brilliant, seemingly impossible level, and did a similar job with the original Virtual On and Sega Rally. For their latest, we're blessed with this amazing conversion of the Japanese Model 3 arcade hit, Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram. Indeed, its quality almost makes up for Genki's rushed and compromised VF3 conversion.

Virtual On is a series, like VF, that never really took off in the States. Whether it was the high cost of the cabinets or the fact that Americans are simply not as familiar and attracted to the anime/mech aesthetic one can never know, but plenty have missed out on this blazing one-on-one third-person fighter/shooter. As such, a little explaining is probably in order.

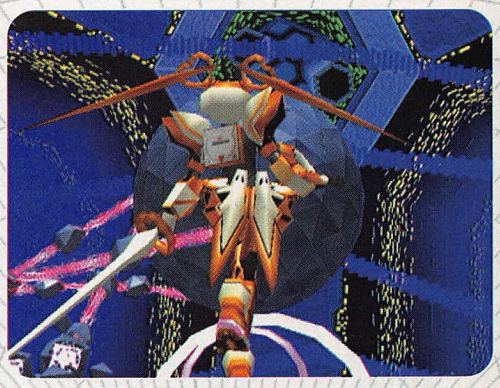
Virtual On's gameplay is all about speed, maneuverability, and cunning. Dashing about in the big, open arenas, mechs can unleash three basic attacks (along with numerous special moves) and the proper use of these weapons is the backbone of the gameplay. You can't just zoom about firing off shots, but instead have to skillfully and quickly coordinate timing, position, and specific weapon use to even have a chance of hitting your opponent, either long range or up close. It takes some getting used to,

ceived. It was an arcade game, remember, so it has that frantic, sped-up quality, but also a great depth and the ability for a good player to perform at a very high level of skill.

First and foremost, Virtual On is a two-player experience, and American players will probably have two options here: a Dreamcast direct-link mode, which requires a communication cable, two DCs, and two TVs together in the same room, and the de rigueur split screen. I say probably because Sega of America is, as of press time, unable to detail their precise plans for this game's online play feature, or even if the game will come out here at all. But there is at least the possibility, and if so, the link feature will be supported, and it's perfect, suffering only because of the amount of hardware that needs to be gathered together in one spot. The split screen however leaves a little to be desired. Because preserving the proper aspect ratio is vital to the gameplay, the split screen has been rendered as two 4:3 boxes sitting side by side. It certainly works, and the gameplay doesn't suffer in the least, but the experience comes across as a little bit underwhelming.

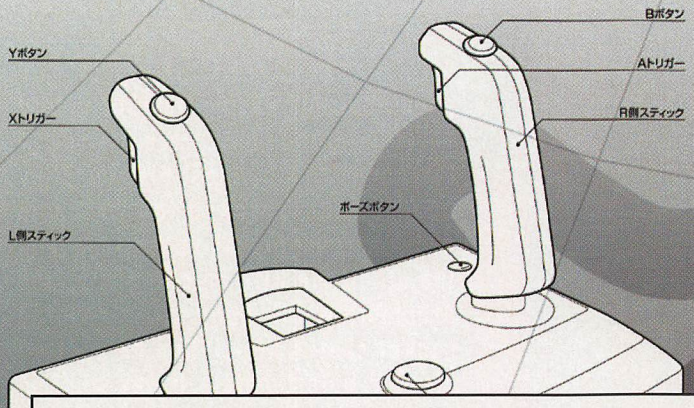
As for whether this conversion is a perfect port of the arcade, I cannot truthfully say without a side-by-side comparison, but it certainly looks very close, with the vibrant *Tron*-meets-*Gundam* aesthetic having been recreated with startling results. The highly detailed and wonderfully designed mechs move about on-screen with amazing speed, and though not entirely apparent at first, with very stylish animation routines. It almost happens too quickly to notice, but over time, you'll begin to see subtleties in the way the mechs move that is truly inspiring. They are forever striking really great anime-like poses as they go about their destructive business, and a fantastic replay mode shows this off to glorious effect.

Virtual On is a singularly exciting experience, and it deserves a success on Dreamcast that it was denied in American arcades. There is simply no other game like it, and the type of competitive action that it delivers is as unique as it is intense. This is Sega arcade design at its absolute best. **GR**











VIRTUAL ON TWIN STICKS

For the true Virtual On experience, the game must be played with Sega's Twin Stick. Currently available in Japan, Sega of America is considering an American release for this highly specialized peripheral. It's a quality piece of kit with a nice robust feel, and only heightens the intensity of a good Virtual On match. Though the stock pad is acceptable, you are much more maneuverable with the sticks and it really gives you the feeling of actually piloting a mech. This is the way the game was meant to be played.



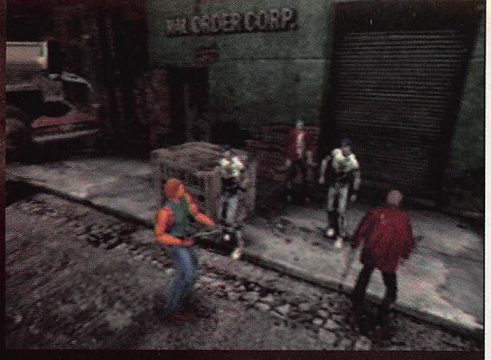
- SMASHING ARCADE CONVERSION
- TYPICALLY FAST SEGA ACTION
- LACKS NETWORK MODE OF JAPANESE VERSION
- SMALL SPLIT SCREEN

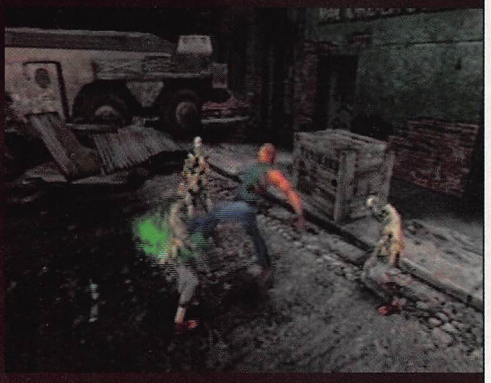
REPUBLIC SAYS... V.O.O.T. IS A SUPREMELY UNIQUE AND EXCITING ONE-ON-ONE EXPERIENCE, AND THIS STUNNING CONVERSION IS ONE OF THE BEST-LOOKING DREAMCAST GAMES YET.

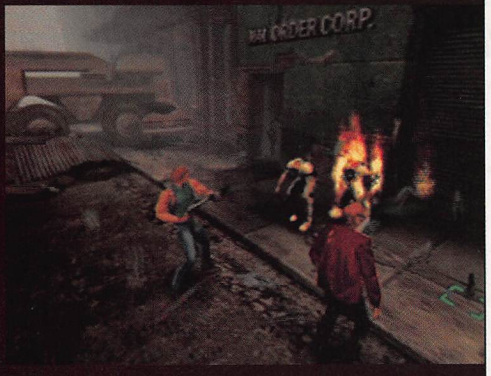
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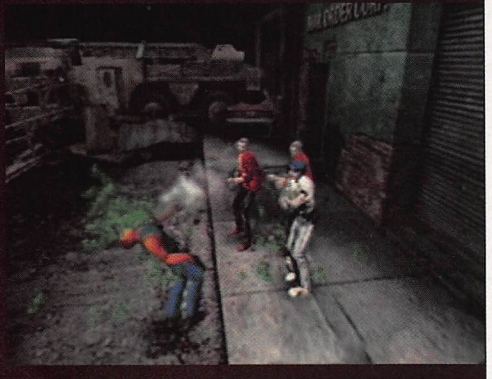

"To really understand how decomposed these zombies are you have to be in close personal contact," Stick thought as he smashed his fist through the braindead
ghoul. But this was no time for theory. Three new bonebags were moving in fast, and Stick had lost his gun. They charged. He wrecked the first one with a series of quick uppers, clocked the other one with an elbow pop, and dropped the third guy with a reverse rocket crotch kick. Then he spotted his gun. Unfortunately, it was stuck in his face with a zombie behind it. "Yo, voodoo child," said Stick "Your trigger finger's missing..." sega.com/games
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MATURE
Animated Violence
Animated Blood and Gore

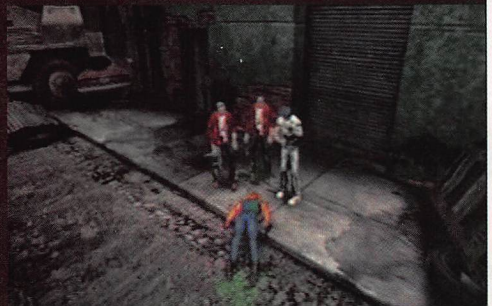
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VIRTUAL ON

GAMERS' REPUBLIC'S JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT TATSUKI MIURA SAT DOWN FOR A BRIEF CHAT WITH VIRTUAL ON 2 PRODUCER/DIRECTOR JURO WATARI. THEIR EXCHANGE FOLLOWS.

Gamers' Republic: Do you feel this is a better conversion from Model 3 than Sega Rally 2?

Juro Watari: Yes, I do. Although we did our best when converting Sega Rally 2, the schedule was very tight. [With Virtual On 2], we were finally able to draw perfect performance from our software.

GR: Although Sega Rally 2's frame rate couldn't sustain a constant 60 fps, you've made Virtual On 2 run at 60 fps, even in the network battle. What was learned in the process of Rally 2's Dreamcast conversion?

JW: Both games use a network server in Japan called "Dwango" for network play. When Rally 2 was released, its performance couldn't reach 100 percent in the network mode. This time, we were able to achieve that. I would say that we were able to draw perfect performance from our software and network, instead of saying we have learned from the process of Rally 2's conversion.

GR: What kind of graphics software did you use to create the characters and environments in the game?

JW: We used Softimage. However, the price Microsoft sells it for is unbelievable, [and it's] one bug after another. We don't have any choice in the matter, though. As a major user, I'd like to say, "Cut the crap!"

GR: Wow, I don't think we can publish this in our magazine!

JW: If you consider it the complaint of a user, I think you can do it. I want Microsoft to listen to the opinion of one of its most significant users and customers.

GR: Why is there no network support for the U.S. version of VO2?

JW: Until someone creates a network infrastructure for Dreamcast analogous to Dwango in Japan, network battle will be impossible in the U.S. You might say, "Why can't we battle over the net in VO2? Quake can do it!" The reason is the difference between whether the network is synchronous or asynchronous.

GR: Is the Dreamcast Twin Stick significantly different than the one used in arcades?

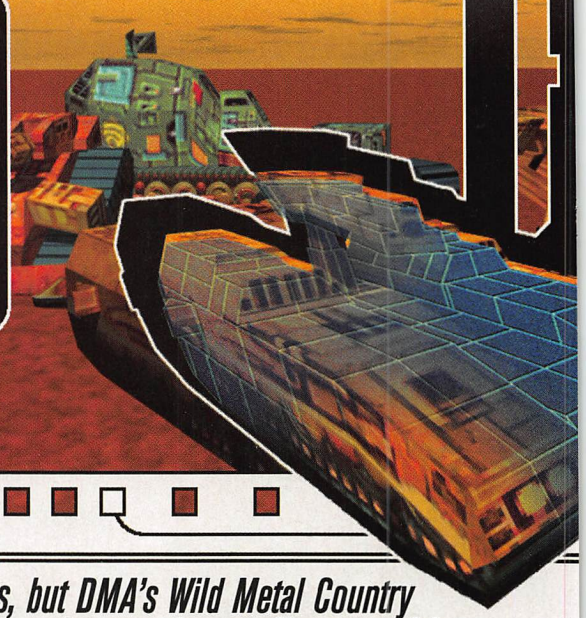
JW: It's very similar to the arcade version, although people who tried out the Twin Stick at the Tokyo Game Show complained that it was softer than the arcade one. Let me say that the amount we can spend on arcade and console controls is totally different. In arcades, game machines' controllers are used by many people all day long, so we have to make them tougher. I think that our Dreamcast Twin Stick will offer the best performance possible for its cost. I can say that with confidence, since nobody else is releasing another Twin Stick [laughs].

WILD METAL COUNTRY

BY DAVE HALVERSON







It may not win any beauty contests, but DMA's Wild Metal Country delivers solid, intelligent gameplay and excellent ambience





Dropping the player into 21 non-linear missions in an effort to retake three hostile planets and secure their power cores, Wild Metal Country is an engrossing experience that envelops you in its otherworldly veneer. What it lacks in eye-popping visuals it ardently makes up for in ambience and engaging, immersing, methodical gameplay. Vastly improved compared to the PC version, campaigns take from 25 minutes to an hour or more to complete and as the game progresses they take on a life all their own from planet to planet. From massive layered fortresses protected by hordes of fixed guns, to deep valleys and complex canyons buzzing with 17 varieties of mobile attackers, DMA successfully conveys the feeling you're on a desolate planet, fighting for survival. The game derives much of its appeal from the cat-and-mouse gameplay that ensues as you deal with each type of fixed and mobile foe. The game constantly confronts the player with complex situations, creating an engaging non-linear experience made all the more satisfying by the detailed models, realistic explosions, and ominous sound effects that accompany the action. I began WMC thinking "Wow this could get boring," as the first few campaigns are pretty sparse, but by the time I hit the Red Planet I was completely submerged in the action. There's something about slowly weaving through a winding canyon road, deep within a mountainous region, the wind howling amidst a light snowfall, and hearing an attacker coming around the bend, dead ahead. Psychological warfare is highly rewarding... especially when you come out the victor. On the flip side there are times when things get ultra-chaotic—charge one of the planets final guardians and you'll find out just how.

Overall, DMA has done a fine job with Wild Metal Country, providing Dreamcast users with a formidable first tank game. Level and mecha design, enemy AI, and especially the physics, are all good. There is, as they say, a fly in the ointment, however. While I do understand the use of ambient sounds in place of music, I think it is a mistake to not have some type of music available in each area. I realize this is meant to be sort of a Cybermorph with tanks (and I'm grateful for it), but no matter how subtle, music can always be utilized to help set the tone, and in WMC I can think of many artists that could have added to the game's ambience. DMA's "Dynamic Sample Layering" is impressive and supplies a true-to-life sound experience, but at least give us the option to key in some BGM. Besides, how can a company called Rockstar make a game with no music? Otherwise, I found Wild Metal Country one of the better "thinking man's" shooters out there, with 21 missions to do your way, excellent control, solid multiplayer modes, and gameplay to burn. GR



- EXCELLENT ENEMY AI AND DESIGN
- VAST EXPANSES: ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES
- TANKS LEAVE TRACKS IN THE SAND AND SNOW!
- I NEED MUSIC, DAMN IT!

REPUBLIC SAYS... A FAR CRY BETTER THAN THE PC GAME, WILD METAL COUNTRY IS CERTAINLY A WELCOME GAME FOR THE DREAMCAST. I HOPE TO SEE A SEQUEL WITH GRAPHICS TO MATCH THE GAMEPLAY.

8



ELEMENTAL GIMMICK GEAR

BY DAVE HALVERSON





Does a hand-drawn top-down 128-bit action/RPG with 60-fps polygonal boss battles sound like a good idea for a Dreamcast game?

Hell yes it does. Take a good long look my friends, because this may be the last game of its kind that you'll ever see. Taking the best elements from the top-down action/RPG category of yesteryear, from games like Link's Awakening and The Secret of Mana, Hudson has crafted an infinitely playable adventure that stays true to the formula while using the Dreamcast's superior technology to bolster the experience. Although the English translation in our version still needed some tweaks, the story runs quite deep. The EGG (Elemental Gimmick Gear) is discovered during the excavation of an ancient ruin. Inside its metal shell lies a lone comatose pilot. Over the next 100 years, the EGG is studied and eventually copied, replicated, and used in many worldly applications such as construction work, as a weapon, and as general transportation. The game begins at the Yam Excavation Lab where the pilot, Leon, has been asleep since the EGG's discovery. A team of explorers has disturbed the surrounding ruin and awakened a derelict alien organism within. Its tentacles, swallowing up the surrounding lands, causes "The Sleeper" (who has not aged a day since he was discovered) to awaken, and with no recollection of who or what he is, the adventure begins.

The game is composed of a series of meticulously hand-drawn labyrinths and overworld areas with a distinctive alien-meets-earth look. The world is further brought to life by the new-age soundtrack that seems to fill every crevice and crack of the beautiful architecture. Like Link's Awakening, you must acquire certain abilities or elements to open new areas, and so you

▸ CONTINUED ON PAGE 186

- STUNNING HAND-DRAWN VISUALS
- 60 FPS 3D BOSS FIGHTING IS EGG-CITING
- ONE OF THE BETTER SOUNDTRACKS OF THE YEAR
- HIGHLY ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY

REPUBLIC SAYS... A WONDERFUL MIX OF OLD AND NEW, EGG EXEMPLIFIES HOW THE NEXT GENERATION CAN BLEND WITH THE OLD TO AN EXCELLENT END. MY THANKS TO VATICAL FOR MAKING IT HAPPEN.

B



F-1 WORLD GRAND PRIX

BY MIKE HOBBS

Video System surprised everyone with this stunning-looking F1 simulation. Psygnosis can no longer claim the top drive in this genre



With record speed, Sega decided to release Video System's Formula One World Grand Prix in America, quickly snatching up the rights to this import. It's one of their better moves of late, as this game quite unexpectedly represents the ultimate console F1 experience.

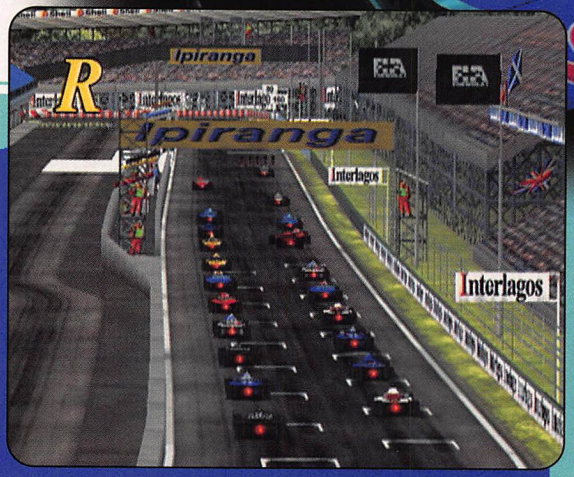
Truth be told, my hopes were none too high for this game. I didn't expect much of a 3D engine from Video System, nor did I expect a game that would play better than Psygnosis' latest entry on PlayStation. I'm happy to say I was proven gloriously wrong. Not only is this the best-looking attempt at Formula One I've ever seen, but Video System has blessed the game with nearly every option an F1 zealot could hope for. The only thing it lacks is a license for the '99 season, instead featuring the teams, circuits, and drivers of the '98 season. That's a bit of a shame; I would love to see the new Malaysian track in Kuala Lumpur as rendered by the Dreamcast. Other than this, one could not ask for a better, more comprehensive F1 title.

Most striking about this game is the attention paid to detail throughout: Skid marks stay on track lap after lap; drivers' heads react convincingly to G-forces; fingers flick the steering-wheel-mounted paddle shifters. It's all quite astounding, but not as much as this game's engine. Massive stretches of track reach into the distance with myriad real-world details sprinkled liberally at every turn—crowds even wave flags about as you scream past the grandstands. Indeed, this is how a Formula One game is supposed to look.

Fortunately, this is no hollow technology display. The gameplay is solid and caters to every taste, ranging from a simple three-lap race all the way up to a full-length grand prix complete with pit stops, safety cars, and damage. In addition, cars can be tweaked to no end, pit stops feature full pit crews, there is telemetry for everything, and the control is realistic and challenging without ever feeling impossible.

What more is there to say? F1 fans will be in heaven with this game, and Video System has just given Psygnosis a new target. GR









- STUNNING ATTENTION TO DETAIL
- COMPREHENSIVE CAR SET UP ABILITY
- FANTASTIC SOUND AND GREAT MUSIC
- FRAME RATE DIES IN THE RAIN

REPUBLIC SAYS... THIS IS THE BEST APPROXIMATION OF FORMULA ONE I'VE EVER SEEN ON A CONSOLE. IF IT HAD THE FULL '99 SEASON MODEL, IT WOULD ALMOST BE PERFECT.

A-

S SEEN ON TV

HERE'S 3 NEW WAYS TO SCREW AROUND AND ACCOMPLISH NOTHING!













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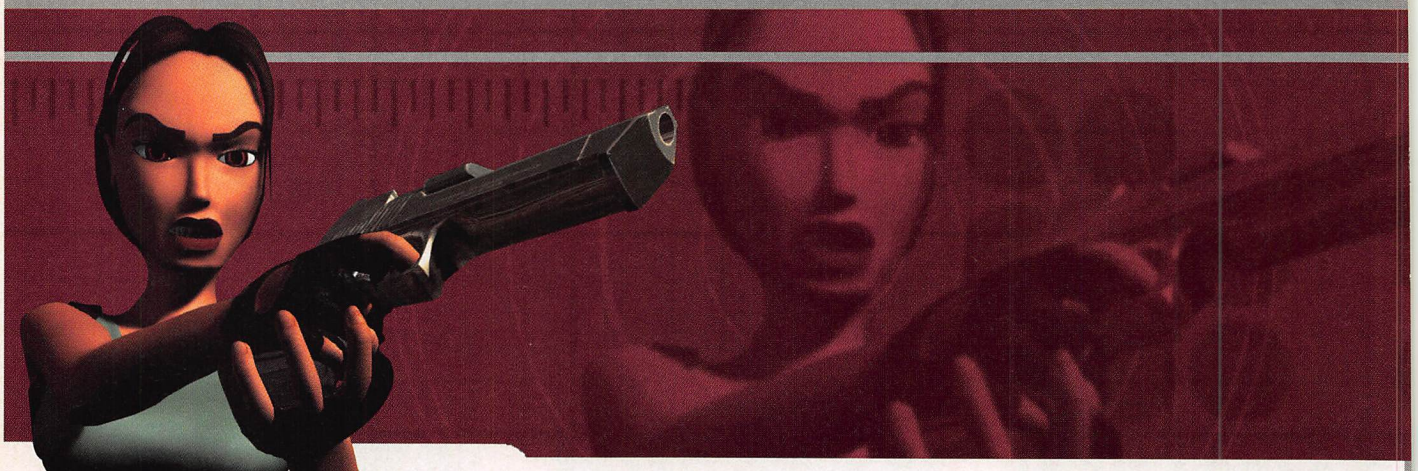
NG PENDING
RP
ENT RATED BY ESRB

ONLY FOR GAME BOY COLOR

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TOMB RAIDER 4

BY BRADY FIECHTER



Miss Croft continues in her usual prime form

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is a sprawling adventure, full of visual intrigue, engaging and deeply challenging. It's a lot like the last three games in the series, with the indomitable Lara Croft on yet another exhibition into the heart of exotic locales, looking to acquire all sorts of mysterious artifacts while being confronted by an unscrupulous rival and his cronies. This time out, Lara's source of conflict is childhood-teacher-turned-nemesis Werner Von Croy, who is ripped directly out of the pages of Raiders of the Lost Ark.

In this latest in one of gaming's most durable series, Miss Croft is led to the mysterious tombs and catacombs of Egypt. The story concerns the ancient god Set, who is about to be reanimated at the expense of the world. It's old fashioned, easily digestible gaming swill that carries the game along through a bevy of cutscenes and superb rendered cinema, which are voiced convincingly and give the adventuring a bit more punch.

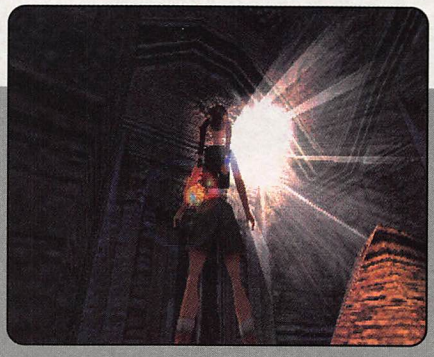
Going back to its roots, The Last Revelation has lightened up the action a bit, leaving the game to be dominated by atmosphere and exploration. There are times when events lead to a city or expansive outdoor environment, but most of the raiding going on is in the bowels of darkly lit tombs. Lara has a typical arsenal of weapons, from the grenade launcher to the Uzi to the crossbow, and she can now attach laser sites onto certain weapons for pinpoint accuracy. This comes in handy for popping off the heads of skeletons or targeting switches and various other objects.

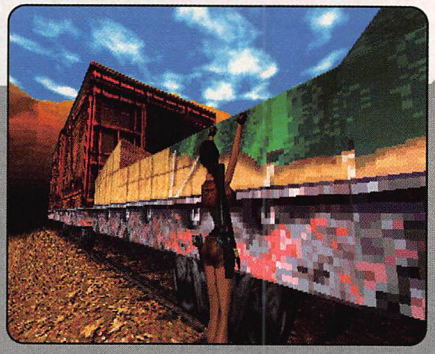
When it comes down to the true business at hand—getting to a far-off door to grab that prized artifact—Lara finds herself employing the same basic set of moves she

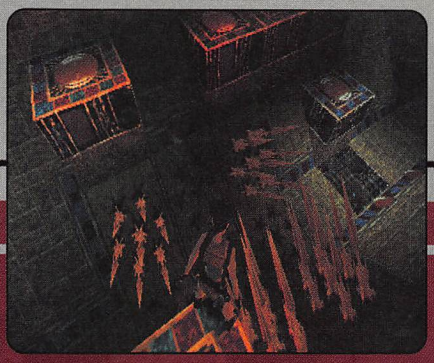


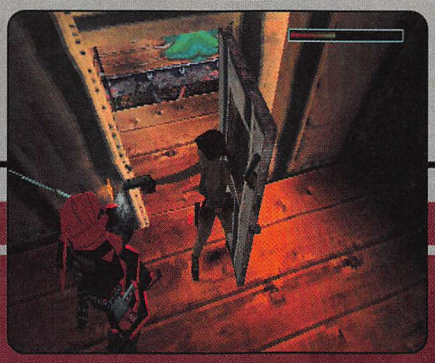




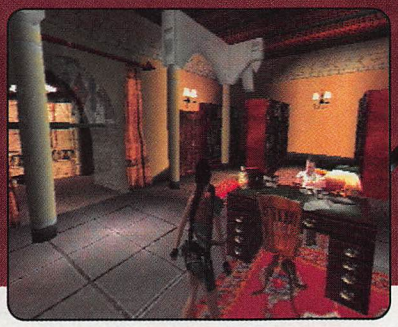


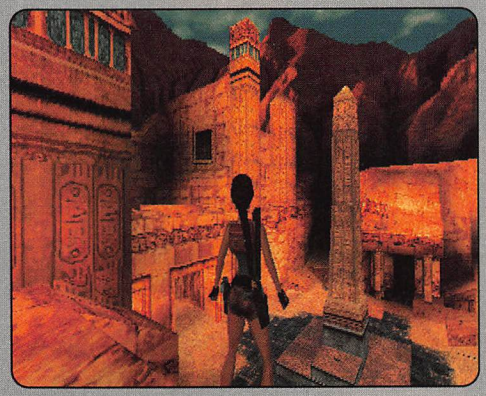












A true adventure, challenging and engrossing

has had in the past: crawling, climbing, swinging, swimming and jumping. Now, she can also climb poles and swing on ropes, and a motorcycle or jeep sometimes comes in handy for those times that running and leaping won't quite make it. Not much has changed, really, and despite an array of interesting puzzles to widen the experience, this is pure Tomb Raider, the way I like it: the same familiar set of traps and obstacles to overcome and obscured switches and levers to find power the gameplay.

And then there's the same sweeping sense of awe and wonderment that has always defined this series. Last Revelation, like its predecessors, is a true adventure, where the world seems to extend well beyond the boundaries of a typical game. Great moments abound, like the scene where Lara has to negotiate the cars of a moving train.

As much as I like Last Revelation, it does begin to unravel in its second half. The game is dauntingly complex, with a lack of focus and sense of direction that becomes increasingly crippling the more the game opens up. And with all its grand ideas, the game needs to be on more accommodating hardware. Unchecked ambition tends to overstep their ability, but the minds behind Tomb Raider: Last Revelation have still managed to present the kind of adventure that is rarely duplicated. **GR**

- LOOKS AS GOOD AS A TOMB RAIDER POSSIBLY CAN ON PS
- SUPERB USE OF AMBIENT SOUNDS
- CORE NEEDED MORE TIME TO CLEAN UP THE ROUGH POINTS
- THE COMPLEXITY COMES DOWN TO POOR DESIGN CHOICES

REPUBLIC SAYS... I STILL FIND TOMB RAIDER A DEEPLY INVOLVING GAME THAT DESERVES NEW LIFE ON PLAYSTATION 2. LARA HAS MORE THAN ENOUGH LIFE LEFT IN HER.

B





GRAN TURISMO 2

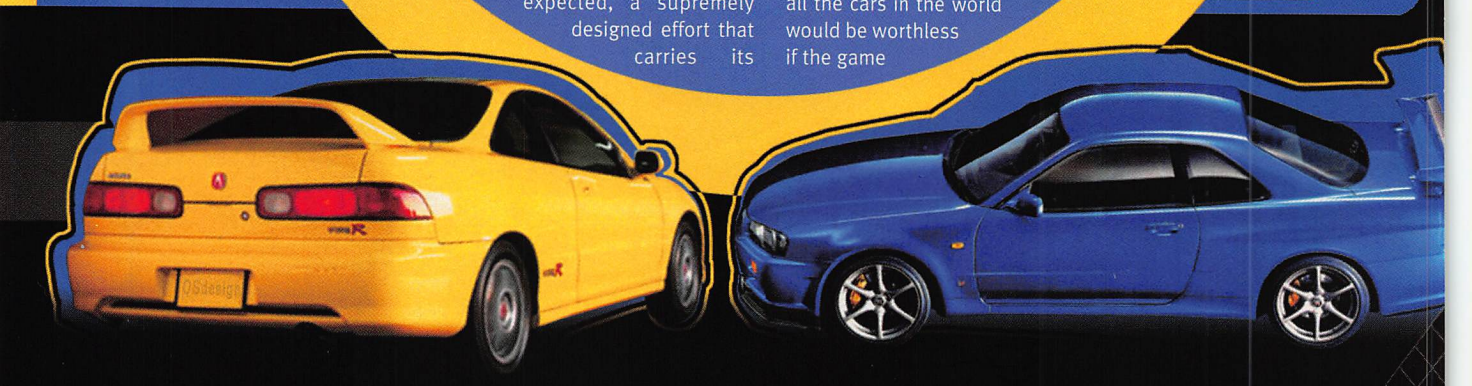
BY MIKE HOBBS

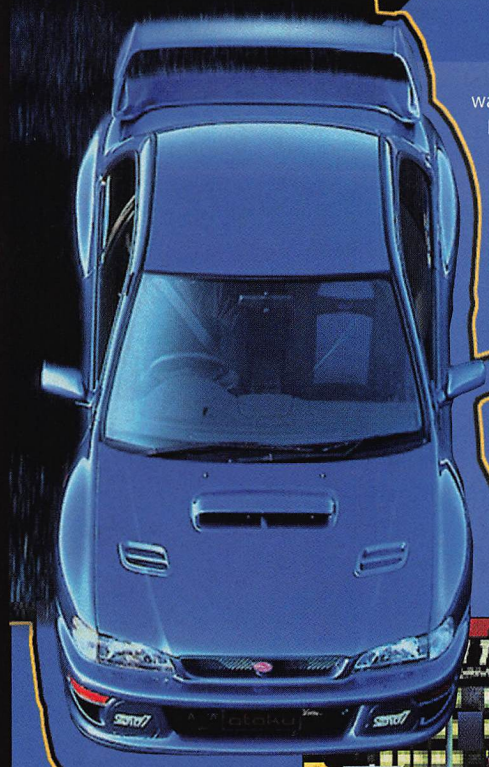
What is the perfect sequel? My definition of that, at least as it applies to video games, is something that is more or less the same, but better. That rather neatly describes Gran Turismo 2, a ridiculously ambitious sequel pulled off with great hubris by Polyphony Digital. There is no cashing in here, no reliance on the goodwill surrounding first game; this is a massive and completely worthwhile upgrade to one of the finest racing experiences of all time.

In a game this size, it's difficult to find a place to begin, so let's just start with some hard numbers: the car count in this game approaches 600; including variations, there are some 50 different courses; the game comes on two discs, one for arcade mode, one for simulation. Gran Turismo 2 is big, to be sure, but don't get the idea that this is just some bloated piece of software with no focus, overflowing with features for the sole purpose of bludgeoning the gamer into submission. No, this is, as expected, a supremely designed effort that carries its newfound heft with grace and style.

But how is it different? Though Polyphony Digital could have gotten away with just upping the car count, they've gone so far as to add rally cars and courses and there are now more racing challenges than any sane gamer could ever tackle. For instance, each manufacturer (whose ranks are now much more global) has a number of specific car challenges: Honda has an NSX-only race; Audi a TT race; MG a Mini race, and so on and so forth. These join the returning general-class races, along with new challenges to reflect the more diverse car types, like muscle car competitions and even a Pike's Peak climb. There is so much more, and I can practically guarantee that you will never run out things to do in this game.

It's perhaps easy to lose sight of the fact that above all else, Gran Turismo 2 needs to succeed during those moments when you're actually playing, controller in hand; all the cars in the world would be worthless if the game

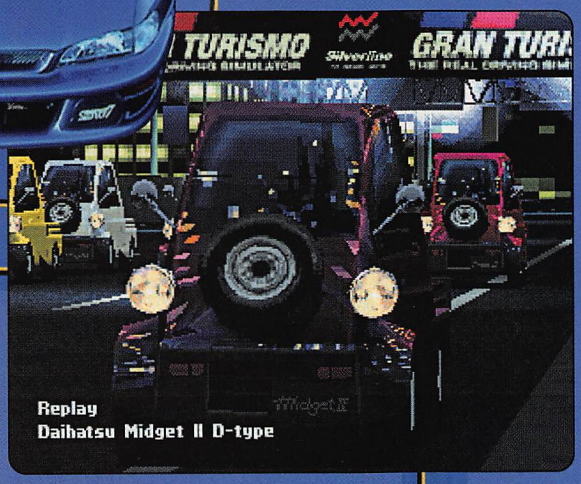




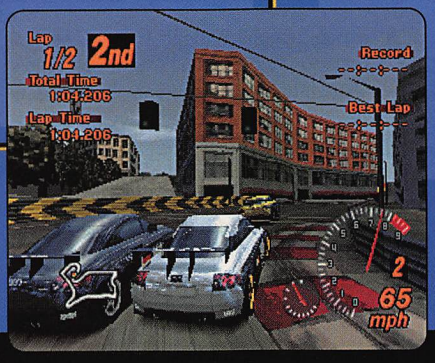
wasn't any fun. Considering that Polyphony Digital would have had to work hard to ruin what they started in the first game, you can guess how this one measures up: it's as brutally addictive as ever. The racing action is jaw-droppingly good, the very best you can get on the system. Between the amazing physics engine, old and new track design, and AI designed for close racing excitement, you'll never tire of simply zipping around the courses, relishing how the car behaves as it makes its way through the virtual world. This series still features the most convincing sensation of rubber on tarmac ever in a video game, and the "feel" of the car shifting its weight from side to side as you go through a chicane is truly something special. And like Namco and Sega, Polyphony knows how to design tracks with a wealth of great corners and corner combinations that continually reward as their proper lines become more and more apparent and familiar.

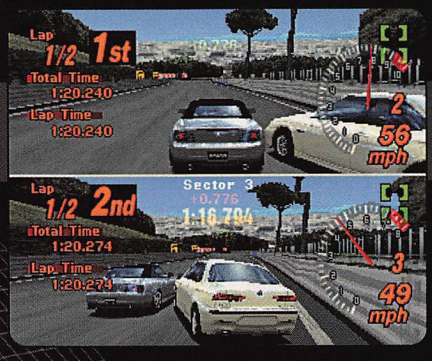
Naturally, I do have some tiny nits to pick. For one, the graphics haven't received much of an upgrade. The cars are perhaps a little rounder, a little more coherent than in the first game, and they are still amazing-looking in replays, but the track detail remains a little rough and the track backgrounds are still bad. I know there are a lot of polys on the cars and a lot of processor-intensive physics going on, but GT2's overall look is no match for the sheer beauty of Ridge Racer Type 4. It's easy to forgive this flaw considering, and actually, it's a more of a criticism of the aging PS hardware. Also slightly annoying is the unnecessary "pumping up" of the soundtrack for the domestic version. Americans have been deprived of the classy, inspiring, low-key tune that opens Gran Turismo for the second time (now it's a Cardigans song), and there is licensed music to contend with during the racing. Stone Temple Pilots, Garbage, Rob Zombie, and Foo Fighters, among others, have had their tunes dropped into the game, and I say it's a mostly ill fit. I know some people will get a kick out of this, and I do like a couple of the choices, but the game simply doesn't need it. The music should be almost innocuous, there just to give a beat to the action, as in the Japanese version, and GT2 seems so far above such top-40 stunt casting.

Enough ranting. This game is good enough to survive the music of a high school marching band. As a sequel it's conceptually perfect, and while it may not look much better or play that much differently from the first, it doesn't need to, not by a long shot. This is as good as racing gets on the PS. GR











■ MASSIVE CAR COUNT	■ GAMEPLAY STILL SUPERIOR
■ MASSIVE CHALLENGE COUNT	■ DOESN'T LOOK MUCH DIFFERENT

REPUBLIC SAYS... THE JOYS MAY BE THE SAME, BUT GRAN TURISMO 2 OFFERS UP SO MUCH MORE, IT'S MIND-BOGGLING. PLAY AT ONCE.

A



TOMBA! 2

BY DAVE HALVERSON

Whoopee Camp's stellar Tomba! sequel is Sony's greatest action romp since Ape Escape. A deeper, more immersive platforming experience you will not find





Anyone zealous enough to have braved the 100-plus tasks of Whoopee Camp's first PlayStation game Tomba! will be happy to know two things: they've solved the loading problem (including the equip screen) that plagued the original, and the game now covers vastly more area than did the original, which had you going back and forth among the same areas far too much. Of course, the game is also now fully 3D—and it's some of the most breathtaking in the console's five-year history.

The adventure begins when Tomba's main squeeze, Tabby, disappears. We soon find out (well, after an hour or so) that the evil pigs have attempted to steal the scared necklace Tomba so diligently chased after in the last game (he let her wear it), and when Tabby just said no, they figured they'd just take the whole package. Getting to her is the task at hand. But it isn't going to be easy, as those wily pigs have covered their tracks well, leaving a glut of obstacles in their wake. Tomba will meet and interact with scores of people and creatures in his travels, and each plays an integral role in what has to be the most complex action/RPG ever devised. Some of the crazy contraptions Whoopee Camp has designed have to be seen to be believed. The perfect blend of action and interaction, this game is all about tasks, even more so than the original. They start coming the minute you begin playing and just keep piling up as you progress. The game is almost unique enough to merit a new genre moniker. Tomba is constantly looking for something or someone: he needs a key, he needs a gear cog, he needs to find a tool, he needs to deliver something—the little guy is run ragged. It is in these mini-quests that Whoopee Camp has instilled a wickedly clever and endlessly entertaining chain of events, brought to life through compelling gameplay and memorable characters. A more creative game you'll not find anywhere. And while Tomba is branded for kids (as is made apparent in the game's English translation), the gameplay is decisively intermediate to advanced. I see Tomba as a game that transcends age. It's just a great game. GR

- ALL THE PLATFORMING YOU CAN HANDLE. PLUS...
- VAST EXPLORATION AND INTERACTION
- SO MUCH TO DO AND SEE. PLUS AMAZING VISUALS
- PARTS OF THE SOUNDTRACK WEAR THIN.

REPUBLIC SAYS... TRUTH BE TOLD I'D RATHER THIS WAS THE NEXT GHOULS 'N GHOSTS (THESE WERE THE GAME'S CREATORS) BUT I STILL LOVE TOMBA. GREAT CHARACTER, GREAT GAME.

B+



FRONT MISSION III

BY J.R. HAUGEN

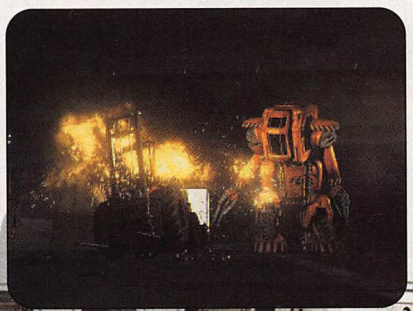


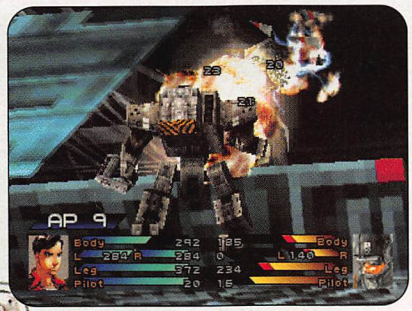
One might think that the idea of giant robots, also known as mechs, would get old after all this time; but games like Front Mission 3 demonstrate why they are so hip. Front Missions 1 and 2 never made it to the U.S., but the third installment is fully localized, in all its mechanized glory.

For those who are not aware of the story, the year is 2112, and the world's countries have unified into alliances. Military actions are carried out by mechs known as wanzers. You control a strapping hero named Kazuki Takemura (you can even change the name to Britney Spears, if you want), who is a wanzer test pilot. When your sister is involved in a mysterious explosion, you are drawn into a complex story involving mech combat and international intrigue.

Front Mission 3 is, at its core, a turn-based strategy game in the vein of Shining Force. You must intricately plan out your moves and attacks, predict the enemies' moves, and ultimately destroy them. This is the fun part, because disabling parts limits their abilities. Each mech has ranged and melee attacks, from missiles to knuckles.

The RPG part is what makes up the bulk of this game. Most of your time is spent talking to NPCs or surfing the network within the game and checking your e-mail. This, unfortunately, bogs the game down, although the story is definitely interesting. The music is great, as should be expected from Square. And also as expected from Square, Front Mission 3 is a good game overall. GR





- SOME OF THE BEST CG SCENES ON ANY CONSOLE
- INVOLVING STORY THAT DRAWS YOU IN
- INTENSIVE, DYNAMIC COMBAT SEQUENCES
- PACE IS TOO SLOW

REPUBLIC SAYS... FRONT MISSION 3 BRINGS A LOT TO THE TABLE FOR TURN-BASED COMBAT STRATEGY. THIS GAME'S GOOD ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU WANT TO WATCH "ROBOT JOX."

B

RIDGE RACER 64

BY MIKE HOBBS









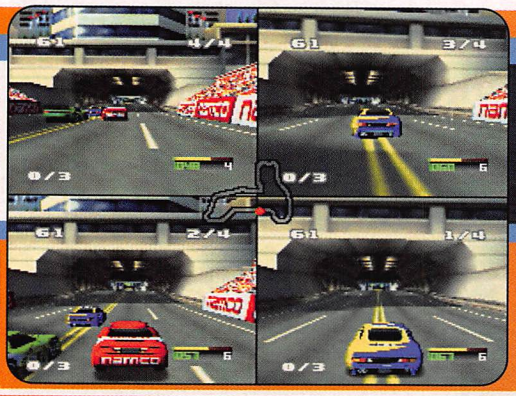
The N64 certainly will not go down in history as the system for racing thrills. F-Zero and Mario/Diddy notwithstanding, there is a serious lack of, well, serious racing action to be had on the system. Thankfully, one of the PlayStation's "big two" racing series has found its way to the Nintendo machine in the form of the stunningly named Ridge Racer 64, and it's a good, albeit late, injection of purebred racing action.

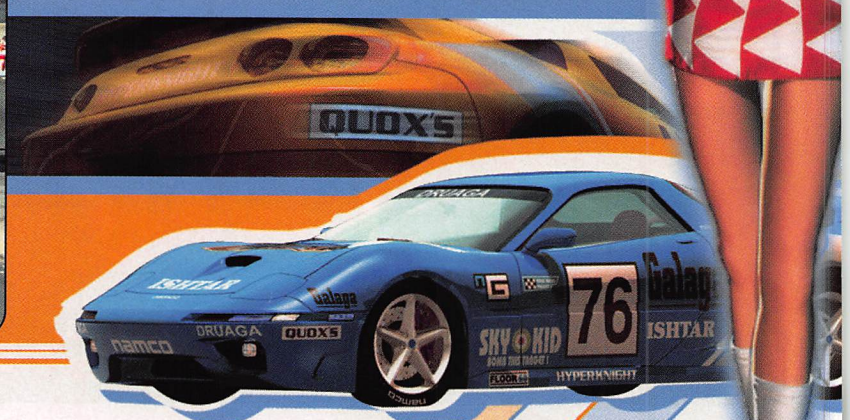
This amalgam of Ridge Racer and Ridge Racer Revolution boasts some nice additions, like a four-player mode and a set of new Namco-approved courses, but it's the spot-on interpretation of the original's control that truly brings the magic of Ridge Racer to the N64. The thrilling powerslides and perfectly modulated course design that facilitates such drifting brilliance are the two crucial things that no other N64 racer has managed to capture. True, Namco has gone beyond their work in the original Ridge Racer games with Rage Racer and R4, but this should have little bearing on the N64 gamer who probably missed out on these greats.

But is this version as good as it could be? At least from a graphical standpoint, I'm going to have to say no. Certainly the game looks good with its long draw distance and new lighting effects, but considering that Namco got the original Ridge Racer running at 60 frames on the PS last year, I expected a little more from this version. And the N64's filtering effects give the game a slightly soft look that doesn't suit Ridge Racer, in my opinion. But the game is at least smooth through the two-player mode (not so much in the four-way split), and will certainly not draw complaints from those who've never seen R4.

To be frank, anyone with a PlayStation and access to the entire Ridge Racer family has no business playing this version, but the game's not designed for them. Indeed, for the N64 player, this is probably the closest thing they'll ever see to an "A" racing title on the system. At the very least, it delivers the joy of a Ridge Racer powerslide, and that's something every gamer deserves to experience. **GR**









- CONTROL BRILLIANTLY PORTED OVER
- GOOD SOUNDTRACK, CONSIDERING
- FOUR-PLAYER SPLIT SCREEN
- FEELS A LITTLE DATED

REPUBLIC SAYS... PITY THE N64 PLAYER WHO'S NEVER EXPERIENCED RIDGE RACER. HERE IT IS, WITH THE CRUCIAL ELEMENTS THANKFULLY INTACT, THOUGH THE BACKBONE OF THIS GAME IS YEARS OLD.

8

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HYPE THE TIME QUEST

BY J.R. HAUGEN

This inauspicious title masks a great deal of enchantment.
A magical adventure that will surely make you smile





It's safe to say that the majority of game players today were reared on Legos (literally, in some cases; I still have the bump-imprints on my poor buttocks). Playmobil seemed so simple, so basic, but Hype changes that. Playmobil-designed characters are a perfect fit for a 3D adventure like this. Why? I don't know. It just works.

The game has many virtues to extol. The world Hype explores is beautiful. The characters are all pleasant, whether good or evil. Magic spells look pretty and have fun animations. The control is tight. The voice acting is actually good. And the musical score! The music is hardly even in the league of video games, transcending it to be on par with the great soundtracks of the film world.



As engrossing as the quest to defeat the evil black knight Barnak becomes, the most enjoyable moments in Hype are those when you just sit back and smile at it. Whenever Hype obtains a new item, he preens for the camera with such a happy Playmobil smile that you can't help but feel the same way. Even boss encounters are like that. One such involves a metal-headed ruffian, looking much like Thunderdome's Master/Blaster, in arena combat. He's a clear-cut bad guy, but still has that Playmobil cuteness. Hype's charm just shines through and through.



An important quality of a game is its ability to draw you in and keep you coming back. Hype does this in spades. There is so much about it that is right and good that it's hard to fault it for anything. It seems like such a kid's game, but really isn't. Hype is a genuinely fun 3D adventure that everyone, any age, should play. GR

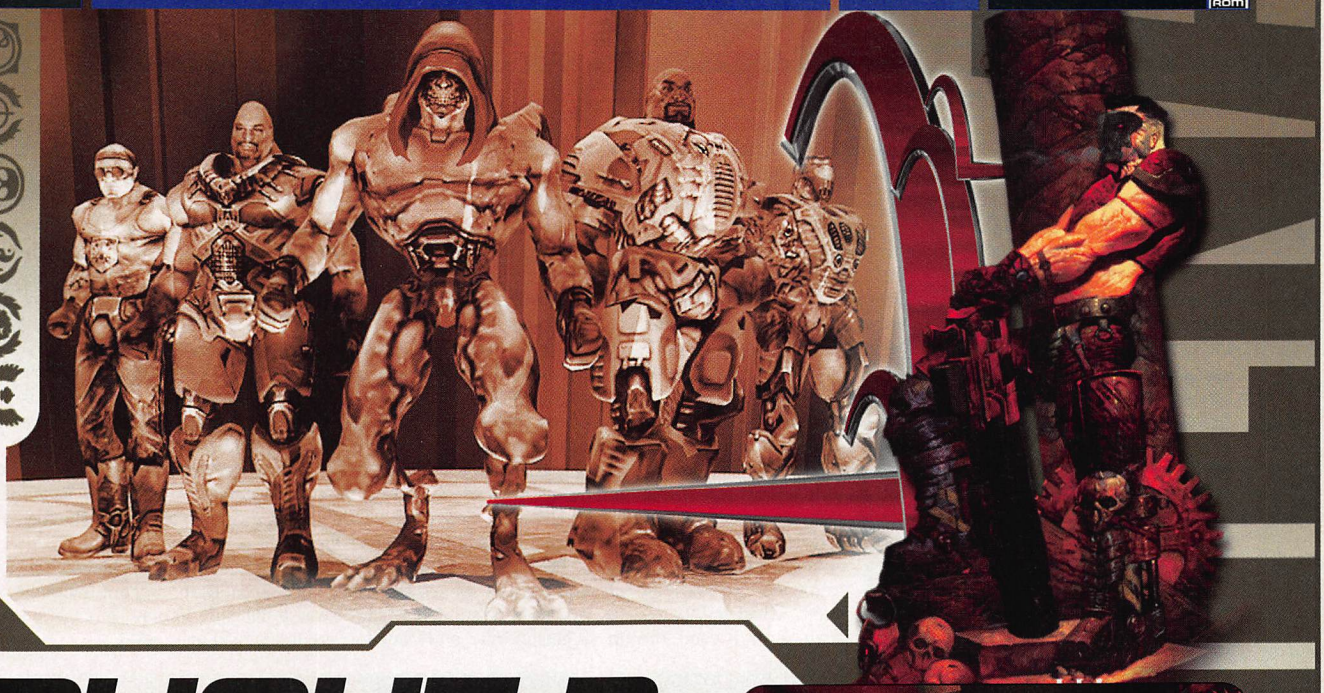






- BRILLIANT CONCEPT AND CHARACTER DESIGN
- EXTRAORDINARY MEDIEVAL ORCHESTRAL SOUNDTRACK
- WORLD DRAWS YOU IN AND WON'T LET YOU GO
- SPARKLING MAGIC AND LIGHTING EFFECTS

REPUBLIC SAYS... IT'S A SHAME THAT HYPE IS ONLY AVAILABLE FOR PC, FOR CONSOLE OWNERS ARE MISSING OUT ON A TRUE CLASSIC.



QUAKE 3

BY FRANK MARTINEZ JR.

Dubiously described as "The Next Big Thing!" by id Software, the latest installment in the acclaimed Quake series, Quake 3 Arena, is by all means *big*. In branching off from the original formula for mass destruction, Q3A offers as much of a genuine update to the series as possible while staying true to the integrity of its lineage.

Gone are the single-player "Escape from Hell" missions of Quakes past; this outing is multiplayer deathmatch only. Now combatants duke it out against other opponents via LAN or the Internet, or against computer-controlled adversaries (bots). Skirmishes take place in arenas themed in both the gloomy gothic motif found in the original Quake, and the high-tech *Aliens*-like architecture of Quake 2, thus explaining the "Arena" in Q3A.

Keeping with the theme of arena-based matches, an intelligent set of bots has been added, plus over 20 new player skins and models and a fully integrated online game server browser. This update offers much of the same when it comes to gameplay, an established characteristic of the Quake series. With a limited number of variables in the game—health, weapons, environment and situation—players can devote more concentration to the actual task at hand: hitting their target. Unfortunately, those who have followed the series since its inception may feel that this new version is more of a dash of Quake 1 and pinch of Quake 2 than a full-fledged update.

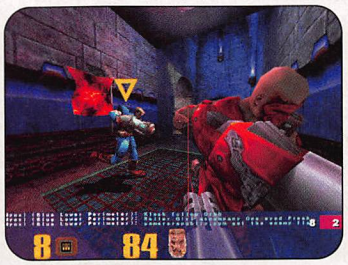
In Q3A's favor, however, is the loving embrace the online community has always given the Quake series. While the game is final, this doesn't necessarily mean it's set in stone. Like the originals, Q3A is set to host a bevy of mods and updates, an obvious advantage of PC gaming. Any aspect of the game is modifiable, from network code to game models and textures. With this in mind, gamers can expect at least two years of life and replayability from Q3A, more than ample reason to pick it up. **GR**













- RAISES THE BAR ON TEXTURE QUALITY AND TRIANGLE FACES
- EXCELLENT ONLINE GAMEPLAY
- DEMANDS AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF PC POWER
- SOUNDTRACK GROWS OLD

REPUBLIC SAYS... Quake 3 Arena reclaims the crown as the online gaming king, assuming you can look past the repetition.

A-

WHEEL OF TIME

PC CD ROM A-

• reviewed by pooch • developer: legend entertainment • publisher: gt interactive • available: now

Since I first previewed The Wheel of Time several months ago, I haven't stopped telling people about the game and was looking forward to the review. For with the opening cinema, the game pulls its participant into the magical world of Robert Jordan's world-famous series of books and doesn't let go until the end. Further enhancing its appeal and straying from the video-game norm, the main character is female—Elayna Sedai, one of the sisters of the Aes Sedai, sorceresses who are sworn to protect the seals of the gates of the underworld. The seals are needed to keep the Dark One at bay, and Elayna's quest is to retrieve a stolen seal.

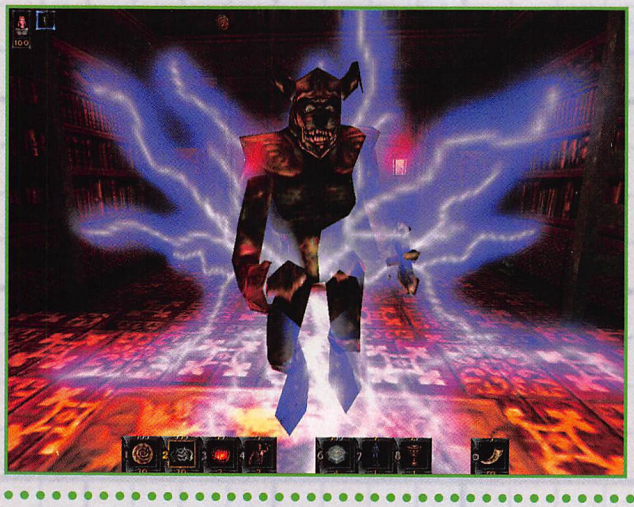


Taking place prior to Jordan's first book and using an enhanced version of the Unreal engine, Wheel of Time is absolutely gorgeous, with majestic, highly detailed scenery at every turn and a boatload of items, called Ter'Angreal, to acquire and use. The in between cinemas are captivating as well, as they link each of the 18 areas together, and all of the character voice acting is superb. Next to the brilliant graphics, the sound effects in the game impress me the most. Whether it's the flies swarming around a dead body or the eerie whispers of the wind, the sounds further enhance the visual experience. Oftentimes, there were frightening sound effects that came out of nowhere and almost made me pee my pants.

The management of the offensive and defensive Ter'Angreal is key to defeating the challenging, sometimes multiple, level bosses. And the bosses, as well as the regular enemies, are quite smart. There are instances where Elayna peers over ledges only to be spotted by an enemy who then comes running around the block to get her.

In addition to the single-player quest, The Wheel of Time includes two different types of networked, multiplayer games: Arena Game, essentially a Deathmatch mode, and Citadel Game, a version of capture-the-flag where players can edit their home bases.

The final three things that I need to say about The Wheel of Time are: if you are a PC gamer, buy this game; secondly, throughout the quest, save and save often; and finally, it was a pleasure to play...to experience The Wheel of Time, and I look forward to the next one. GR





ZOMBIE REVENGE

DC C-

• reviewed by brady fiechter • developer/publisher: sega • available: now

There should be a rule for porting arcade games: port only those arcade games that were actually good to begin with. Zombie Revenge would break that rule, because it is uninspired, hollow game making, made even more apparent as a console title.

The sophisticated look of ZR has been preserved for DC, with excellent lighting effects and all sorts of little details building the levels. But it's mostly empty flash with limited appeal.

One of the more immediate problems with ZR is the leaden controls, which give you tediously sluggish command over your character. Zombies and other forms of undead foes are constantly besieging you, keeping the element of action intense, but there is little enjoyment in their disposal when you demand quick and efficient attacks and are given the complete opposite. The three characters attacks are extremely limiting, and even when you find a meaty weapon like a drill or shotgun to tear your victim apart, there is little opportunity to use them. Most of the time you'll find yourself mechanically blasting away with a slow-action pistol, or monotonous punching and kicking can be strung together for some double-digit combos–which may sound fun but just isn't very satisfying.

In a game in which the central conflict stems from a bunch of flesh hungry zombies, you'd think that ZR would be more of a visual treat, but the classic horror staple has apparently left Sega underwhelmingly inspired—benign enemies and pedestrian level design dominate. There are many low points—the giant skull on the end of a neck that vomits toxic slime made me laugh for all the wrong reasons—and the occasional burst of creativity–yanking pipes from the body of a boss to use as a weapon hinted at the game's potential. And then there are those moments, like when a boss can be defeated by shooting and not moving one step, that make you grateful you'll finish Zombie Revenge on the first try. GR







SHADOW MAN

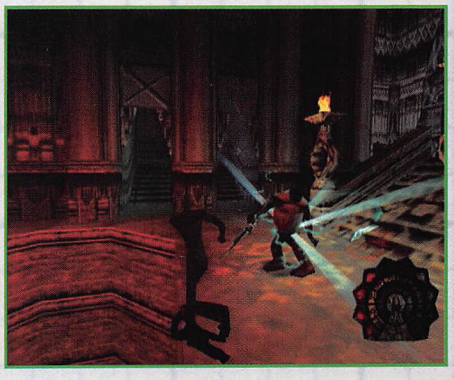



• reviewed by brady fiechter • developer/publisher: acclaim • available: now

In Acclaim's chilling Shadow Man, dread and gloom are a constant. Shadows spill into every corner. Torches burn on cathedral walls and inside temples, piercing the darkness with an eerie glow. Demons float in the skies, mental patients run screaming through asylum halls, brandishing meat hooks and chainsaws, beating their heads on cages. Outside, a dull, haunting sky blankets the crushing atmosphere.

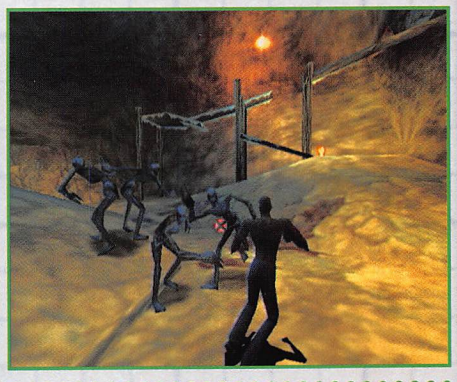
Not since Silent Hill has a game created such a sense of ominous. I love a game like this. To properly play it is with the lights out, at night, with a good stereo distilling the many shrieks, moans and unsettling musical tracks that snake through the Shadow Man universe.

This is one of the best-looking Dreamcast games yet. It's also the biggest, spanning an enormous space from a land of the living to a land of the dead that is overwhelming in its scope. Moving from the living realm of Liveside to the underworld of Deadside, your mission is to seek out a band of five serial killers, who are pawns in the orchestration of a coming apocalypse. Before these evil beings can even be confronted, hours must be spent finding multiple objects of voodoo magic, such as weapons, retractors that rip open the chest of sacrifices to open portals, and pieces of a magical device that allows existing as the ephemeral Shadow Man in Liveside.



The game is deeply nonlinear, allowing passage to multiple hubs from a number of locations. Opening these areas requires the retrieval of dark souls that are scattered across the land, and once you find your way deeper into the game, newfound abilities will call for backtracking to, say, climb a waterfall of blood or walk on fire to reach a new area.





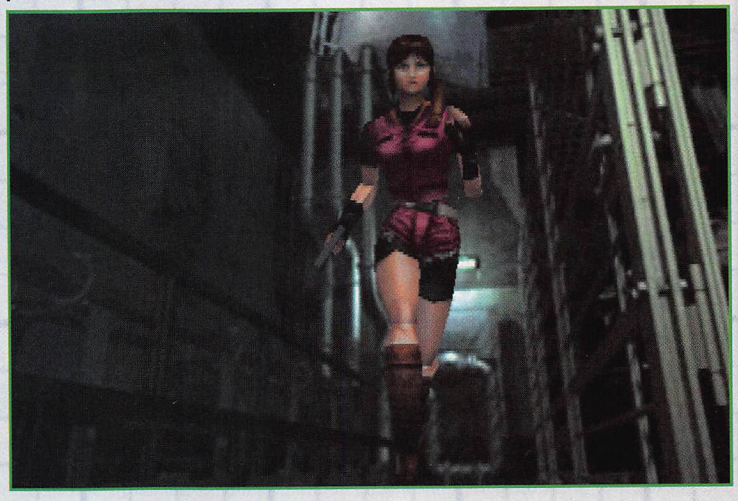
To find yourself at times lost or without direction is a given—the game is almost too large for its own good. But really the major risk of tedium is not the endless exploration; it's the overly thick population of enemies and their unnecessary resilience. If Acclaim would have had the sense to rely on atmosphere and exploration, loosening the tiring hold of the action, an even better game would have been the result. **GR**

RESIDENT EVIL 2

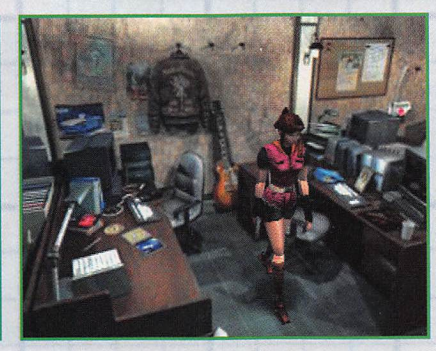


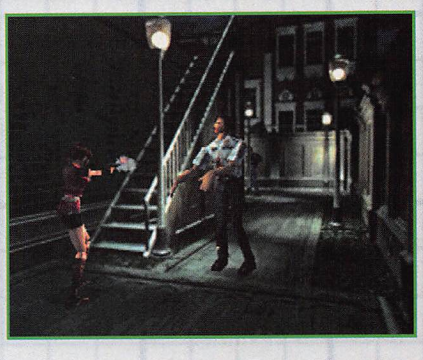

• reviewed by dave halverson • developer: angel studios • publisher: capcom • available: now

I did play Resident Evil and RE 2 on the PlayStation, but between the loading, mismatched visuals and laborious gameplay (due to the fact that I'm trigger happy) attributed to both, I never really embraced the franchise until RE 3 and Code Veronica came along. I'm also reluctant to jump on bandwagons just because one's rolled in to town. I'm into platformers, action-RPGs, quirky imports and the like, for the most part. So, what's my point? My point is that now that there's an N64 version of RE 2, I'm somehow finally able to really get in to the game, and I'm loving it. The models in this version are so clean, I find it markedly more enjoyable, and while the swingin' door is still in effect, it's not quite as arduous as it was on the PS. Not only are the polygonal elements much improved, but the pre-rendered visuals are sharper as well. Amazingly, all of the cinemas, speech, and music have made it over too, making this the most complete cartridge ensemble ever assembled. Resident Evil 2 is a must-own game for the Nintendo 64 set, but even if you've played through the PS game, I think you'll find replaying this version a highly worthwhile undertaking. **GR**









TEST DRIVE 6

• reviewed by mike hobbs • developer: pitbull syndicate • publisher: infogrames • available: now

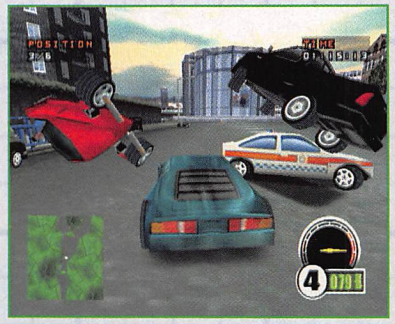
C

What is it that people want from a Dreamcast game? At the bare minimum, decent play and graphics beyond PS and N64. While Test Drive 6 sort of delivers in one of these areas, it does so unspectacularly, a fatal flaw considering the DC's already crowded racing library.

Test Drive 6's worst crime is that it simply does not look that good. The tracks range from almost impressive to dreadfully dull, and all suffer from a ridiculously apparent line of bilinear filtering just ahead of the driver. Mostly, however, things just look uninspired, from the bland buildings to the nondescript countryside. And the licensed cars don't fare much better, vaguely resembling their real world counterparts, nothing more.



Things perk up just a bit in the gameplay department, though. In the normal racing and cop chase modes, there are many opportunities for exaggerated action and some rather amusing smash-ups. Unfortunately, that's about all it has to offer. The control, though predictable, feels very artificial and about as far removed from the satisfaction of Sega Rally 2 or even Tokyo Xtreme Racer as one can imagine. Matters aren't helped by the fact that track design seems to be an afterthought, a seemingly random collection of corners strung together with very little pleasure to be gleaned from driving well.





Even if this was the Dreamcast's only driving game, I wouldn't recommend it. But seeing as how it's one of many, you get the idea. GR

COLIN MCRAE RALLY

• reviewed by mike hobbs • developer: codemasters • publisher: sony • available: now

PlayStation B

Rally racing represents a very particular type of motor racing thrill. Throwing a car around a twisty, one-lane circuit with constantly changing conditions can be a white-knuckle ride of ridiculous proportions. Road surfaces can vary from one corner to the next, requiring constant shifting of driving style. Colin McRae Rally specializes in such thrills.

For those unfamiliar with the concept of rally racing, it's unique in that cars don't race against each other on track, but rather compete for time over special stages. And piloting a rally car is a two-person effort, the driver being assisted by an on-board navigator calling out upcoming turns, crests, and surface hazards.

The idea of not passing and being the lone car out on the course while listening to some bloke rattling-off turns may not seem to be the ingredients of high console action, but this game manages to deliver just that. Thank the well-conceived physics engine for part of this, which makes negotiating the tight, twisting courses equal parts fun and challenge. You really have to work at keeping the car's speed up, clipping corners and powersliding around every sharp turn, and it all feels proper and true, at least within the limits of a video game. With very few straights, battling the track is easily as intense as racing a full field of cars.



It will be interesting to see whether this game has any impact in America, where the World Rally Championship has a niche following at best. CMR is bags of fun, and ought to do well based on that, but as we all know, sometimes that's not enough. GR



JACKIE CHAN'S STUNTMASTER

• reviewed by brady fiechter • developer: radical • publisher: midway • available: now

PlayStation B

I normally bristle at the prospect of transplanting film figures of any kind into a video game, but the amazing Jackie Chan just belongs in digital form. In the first video game to borrow his likeness—what took so long?—Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster does a good job of capturing the blithe humor and distinct style of a Chan feature, presenting the martial arts combat against a backdrop of an impressive twilight China Town cityscape.

The action in Stuntmaster adheres to familiar beat-'em-up combos and the use of pots, fish, chairs, brooms and anything else that may be lying around to smack down a group of bad guys. Chan's motion-captured moves give the game a lot of personality, making the acrobatic throws, punches and kicks more fun than they probably should be. There's nothing revolutionary here, but with its unique presentation joined by a lot of platforming elements and tiered environments, Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster steers clear of the typical arcade-style beat-em-up humdrum. GR





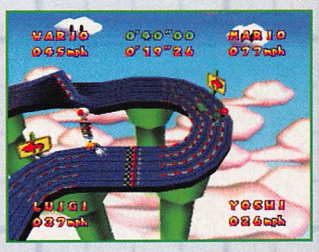
MARIO PARTY 2

• reviewed by j.r. haugen • developer: hudson soft • publisher: nintendo • available: now

NINTENDO64 B+









The original Mario Party was great fun at parties, especially for children and drunk college kids, though I surely hope I'm not referring to the same people here. Raise your glasses, then, or your Pokémon toys, for Mario Party 2 is here.

It's kind of hard to make a sequel to a board game, but Mario Party 2 does what it can to improve upon the first, and does it well. The concept and gameplay are essentially the same as in the original: up to four players take turns "rolling" the die and moving the appropriate number of spaces, usually resulting in a fun multiplayer mini-game, all in the name of collecting the most stars by the end.

There are new power-ups, a coin bank that works like Monopoly's Free Parking, and 44 brand-new mini-games to complement the 20 returning originals. It is also more balanced so that everyone is involved the whole time. This is clearly a better game than the original, and well worth the purchase. **GR**

POKÉMON STADIUM

• reviewed by pooch • developer/publisher: nintendo • available: march 6

NINTENDO64 C+

I have a somewhat personal relationship with those wacky ol' Pokémon. But then again, doesn't everyone by now? So it was a pleasure to review the second, of what will undoubtedly be many, Pokémon N64 games. Not only that, but with a new N64 adapter, called the Transfer Pak, I can now play my Pokémon Game Boy games on my T.V. Wow...it's like the Super Game Boy all over again.

Unlike Pokémon Snap, Pokémon Stadium lets you actually play as the Pokémon. Stadium is kind of a multi-faceted game: the main portion of the game has you conducting RPG-style battles in a ring, with completely 3D monsters, against your friends or the computer; there's an area where you can trade Pokémon with a friend, via Transfer Paks; an area where you can play the GB game on the N64, also using the Transfer Pak; an area with nine different Mario Party-style mini-games; and an area where you can take photographs of your collected Pokémon and turn them into stickers.

In the Battle games, you can either select from an assortment of "pre-caught" monsters, or, using the Transfer Pak, download the Pokémon you've found and built on your GB game, which is kind of cool and gives another reason to find them all. And, as they were with Pokémon Snap, the 3D characters are nicely rendered. The special effects, although not dazzling, are fun to watch. And watch you will, because, except for the mini-games and the actual picking of monsters and moves, the game lacks any real interactivity, as the turn-based, true-RPG battles are CPU-controlled.

With all its Poké-ness, Stadium is definitely aimed at the younger set. For example, the mini-games are located in an area called Kid's Club and are rather basic. Although a couple of them do entertain, like "Run, Rattata, Run" and "Sushi-Go-Round," they get old after a few tries. But it really doesn't matter, does it? As part of the current Midas of the video game industry, Stadium will do just fine when it's released in March. **GR**



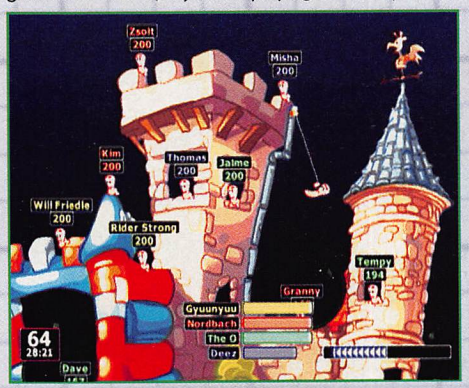


WORMS: ARMAGEDDON

• reviewed by j. r. haugen • developer: team 17 • publisher: infogrames • available: now

DREAMCAST B+

No matter which system it is on, Worms is still Worms. Whenever you start playing the game, you know you're in for some wacky 2D multiplayer goodness. That is, if you are playing it the way it was meant to be played. Worms: Armageddon for Dreamcast takes after all of its predecessors on other platforms in that its multiplayer mode is where it truly shines. The single-player mode, however, is still challenging and fun. This is essentially the same game as on N64 and PC, with a few nifty additions, including new weapons (mole bombs, aqua sheep, and suicide bombs, for instance), much prettier graphics, teaming up, and new voices for the worms.





If you are a Worms fanatic, this is surely the best version of the game you can get. If you're not a Worms fanatic, then it would be good for you to become one, because the multiplayer Worms experience rivals the best of them. A good Worms game can last till the wee hours of the morning, and the best ones will have your friends stop being your friends. That's how intense Worms can get, and it's all the better for it. **GR**

ROADSTERS

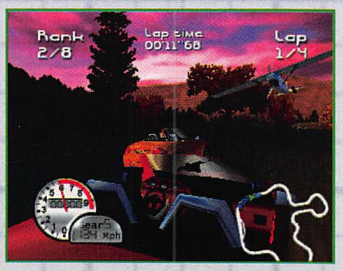
• reviewed by dave halverson • developer/publisher: titus • available: now

N64 C+

I'll say one thing for Titus' Roadsters: it certainly is a great looking Nintendo 64 game. Sporting steady frame rates, impressive effects, and nary a hint of clipping, Roadsters upholds the tradition Titus set for sparkling graphics with Lamborghini Challenge. Devoid of the Wrath-of-God goings-on of the DC version, Roadsters 64 is pretty much a straight racer. Actually, it's as gun-it-and-steer as it gets. What sets it apart are the 30 selectable dream convertibles on display, from the ultra modern Renault Spider to the classic Lotus Seven. There aren't a whole lot of physics at play, and although very convincing weather conditions exist throughout, they have less of an effect than you might expect. Of the game's four modes, aside from the usual (Multiplayer, Time Trial and Quick-Race), Trophy Race is the main draw, where you begin with 45,000 bucks and a will to win. From there it's on to the game's 10 impressive courses, where you'll duke it out with seven other drivers for points and cash. Use the cash to upgrade your car and rise through the game's three classes. Admittedly there's no shortage of N64 racers out there, but there have been few of this visual quality, and its simplistic arcade controls make it a breeze to pick up for younger players or those just aching to drive. The music's a bit on the porn side but with responsive controls, Titus' patented "view scene" option, 30 lovely exotics, and nice replays, Roadsters is definitely worth a look for pure arcade thrills. GR







TOY STORY 2

• reviewed by brady fiechter • developer: traveller's tales • publisher: activision • available: now

PlayStation B-

Toy Story 2 creates its universe out of a house and its surrounding neighborhood, a construction yard, toy stores, and even an airport. Its hero is the fearless Buzz Lightyear, a toy space ranger who engages in all sorts of durable hero stuff, like firing a laser, solving basic puzzles, climbing up poles, sliding down zip lines, and battling bosses. The result of all this is a great-looking game that is a continual source of fun.

The game works well not because of any boundless ingenuity, but because of the solid implementation of its familiar ideas. Endless jumping and climbing over perilous platforms is sometimes exactly what I want out of a game, and Toy Story 2 delivers the goods. GR





FIGHTING FORCE 2

• reviewed by brady fiechter • developer: core • publisher: eidos • available: now

PlayStation D-

Why a sequel to a game that had few redeeming qualities to begin with? I suppose the only logical answer is to vastly improve the mistakes and polish up the sparse bright spots even more, in hopes that the sequel will become something respectable.

Apparently Core was thinking something entirely different. What we have here are the numbing combat moments of Fighting Force combined with another strong visual presence, a sequel that is even more dull to play than the original.

The lone character returning from Fighting Force is Hawk Manson, a government tough guy who is well-versed in the art of running through hi-tech labyrinthine fortresses and finding key cards and loads of military-grade weapons. The game's story concerns an unscrupulous corporation that is preparing a cyborg soldier as the ultimate in military technology, which leads our hero across the globe in lengthy espionage missions: he explores a lot, climbs a lot, and jumps a lot—and shoots, punches and kicks enough enemies to put your senses into a state of deep freeze. Nearly every step of the way, a group of soldiers or mutants or whatever pour out of the dark corners, to the point that not even the most patient and forgiving player can stand to continue.

What buries the game the deepest is the enemy AI. It's bad enough to relive the similar, stiff, completely mishandled hand-to-hand combat of Fighting Force, but having the ability to walk around behind someone who is completely oblivious to your presence is inexcusable. I realize the developers wanted stealthy, thoughtful gameplay, but the implementation of their ideas completely missed the mark. Most of the time, enemies are extremely aggressive anyway, attacking in groups, courteous enough to wait their turn for an ass-kicking. If only Core would have been so courteous as to never conceive sequel. GR



TARZAN

• reviewed by brady fiechter
• developer: eurocom • publisher: activision
• available: now

N64 C+

The first word that comes to mind when describing Tarzan is "cheerful." From the blithe character to the lush, colorful jungle environments teeming with life to the bouncy tunes, the game is a ray of sunshine. Like the PlayStation version, this straightforward action/platformer is rich on presentation, stunted on gameplay, stricken by sluggish control. But the game is so visually exciting that I found myself wanting to play through, overlooking the faults, just to soak in the sights. GR



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(2) Grand Prize Winners will receive a signed Mike LaRocco O'Neal® helmet, a G-Shock® watch, an SMP® jersey, a pair of Scott® Goggles, a copy of SuperCross Circuit™ and a (hed)pe music CD (part of the soundtrack in SuperCross Circuit)

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(10) Second Prize Winners will receive a SuperCross Circuit T-shirt

To enter:

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SCOTT O'NEAL RACING TEAM SMP G-SHOCK (hed) p.e.

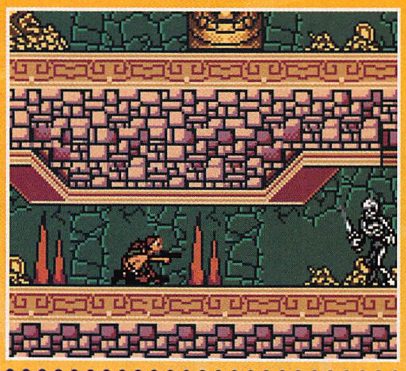
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989 SPORTS

tomb raider dev: core pub: eidos avail: q4 previewed by d halverson This is the Tomb Raider I was hoping for after three polygonal versions on the PC and PlayStation. In fact, many a GR editor's best-case scenario would likely have been for Last Revelation to appear in 2D across the boards. Imagine Castlevania SotN visuals applied to the Tomb Raider formula! But beggars can't be choosers (and LR was pretty great, albeit perhaps somewhat rushed), so we'll take this beautiful-looking Gameboy Color version just the same. Core is going to be the first developer to truly tap the GB Color's new capabilities, sapping its 32K of work RAM and its ability to display 80 to 160 sprites simultaneously without slowdown or flicker. Promising a game that looks similar to that of Flashback or Heart of Darkness on the Genesis or SNES, this has to be the best portable gaming news since the advent of the Gameboy Color itself. Well, except for the announcement of the Gameboy Advance. So, it's the second best news. Among the new TR's key features is a laundry list of juicy 2D bits like FMV cut scenes (!), 2000 frames of animation on Lara, real-time lighting effects, parallax scrolling, a high degree of interaction, and, if you can believe it, sporadic sampled music and voice! We'll have more on this revelation in handheld gaming in the months ahead.



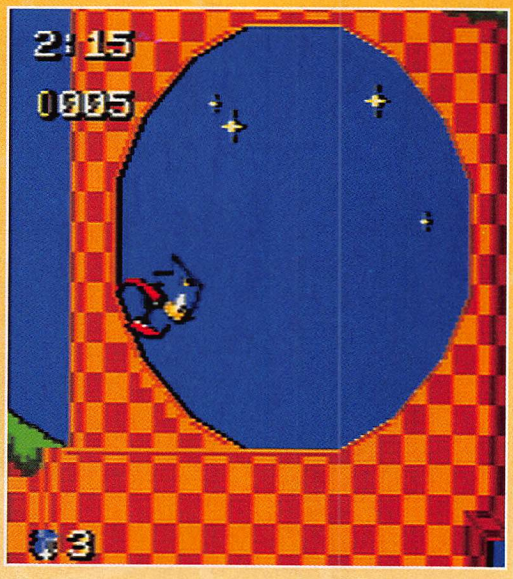




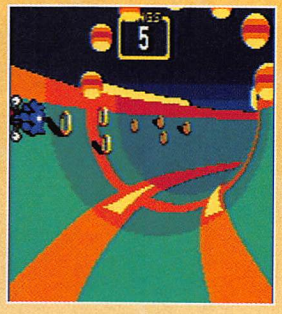
sonic pocket adventure dev: sega pub: snk avail: now reviewed by m hobbs A portable Sonic game is nothing new. Sega's Game Gear was host to several Sonic titles, including the Mario-Kart inspired Sonic Drift. But Sonic's speed was always an ill fit for the humble Game Gear and even the Nomad, as both these systems had passive matrix screens, rendering fast action as a big blur.

On the more modern Neo Geo Pocket, however, this original Sega-developed Sonic game comes across quite nicely, the system's crisp TFT screen keeping the action clear. It's your standard-rate Sonic fare, to be quite honest, with its predictable mix of high-speed ring-collecting runs and slightly awkward platforming, but the classic appeal is there just the same. And to keep things interesting, SPA boasts a two player mode (requiring two systems and two games linked together), one being a one-on-one race and the other a ring-collection competition. Both are fun little diversions from the main game.

There's no question that this is a great addition to the Neo library. Between this and Metal Slug, side-scrolling portable fans really have nowhere else to turn for this sort of old-school thrill. **B**







rayman dev: xantera pub: ubi soft avail: now reviewed by e fear After witnessing the armless and legless one go from Saturn to PC to PS to N64 to DC (and even Jaguar!), it's refreshing to get him on GBC. Taking Rayman back to his 2D roots, Ubi Soft have created a monster of a jumping/shooting/save-the-little-dudes game.

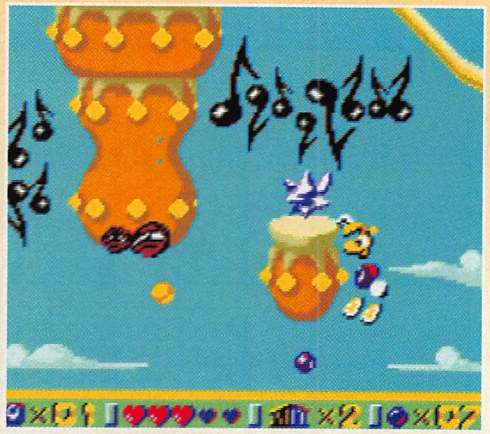
In this version, it seems that Mr. Dark has imprisoned all the Toons of the land, and is locking them up to steal their energy. But the little Tings have escaped his grasp, and although they are too small to help, they enlist Rayman as the savior and help him by pointing the way.

Rayman must travel across the land (one zone at a time), freeing any caged Toons he comes across, and collecting gems, hearts, and other helpful bits while avoiding Mr. Dark's collection of nasties, as well as dangers in the environment. He employs a yo-yo-type weapon to not only incapacitate the bad guys but get pieces of the surroundings to move for his benefit.

If this sounds like a textbook platformer, well, it's time to go back to school! From the gorgeous cartoony backgrounds to the flawless animations to the ingenious level designs, this would be a good game on any system. That it's on GBC makes it all the better. And prepare to sink some time into it: each zone makes up only about 1 percent of the game.

Our only complaint: how can they deliver a rumble-pack cartridge without a memory save? Passwords are for the birds! Or the Tings, as the case may be. **A-**





snk vs. capcom: match of the millennium dev/pub: snk avail: now **reviewed by d smith** The shirttails. It all comes back to the shirttails. Match of the Millennium contains a wealth of details to recall, but what truly sticks in my mind are Iori Yagami's shirttails. As he stands, they animate ever so slightly, moving back and forth. It's only a difference of perhaps one pixel per frame, but it says it all, really. The SNK Vs. Capcom concept was born out of the mad dreams of the most deranged of fanboys, and its creators have responded with a game to make those dreams come true—a blend of beautiful sprite graphics, dead-on control, and unwavering attention to detail.

Though developed by SNK, this is a true blend of both companies' games; it's not just R-2 with Capcom characters. There are control and super-move systems from KOF, Night Warriors, and SF Alpha, and aside from one-on-one battles, you can choose the Versus series' tag-team action or KOF's team play. Every character (18 up front, plus eight hidden ones) is drawn lovingly, but the backgrounds are the real graphical shock. Watch the introduction of the cathedral stage, as a flight of doves takes off in classic John Woo style, and try to tell me you're not impressed. We certainly are. If you don't have a Neo Geo Pocket, you need to get one now, as you're missing one of the flat-out best fighters ever created. **A**









snk vs. capcom: card clash dev/pub: snk avail: now **reviewed by d smith** SNK Vs. Capcom is Pokémon for the die-hard gamer: part collectible card game, part mad love poem to both companies' legacies. Becoming SC Card Clash Champion is only part of the fun. You're sure to burn as many hours just exploring the in-joke-laden RPG world (you can take on Shinji Mikami at cards, and don't miss the Forgotten Worlds homages) as you spend collecting and trading the hundreds of pieces of beautiful character art.

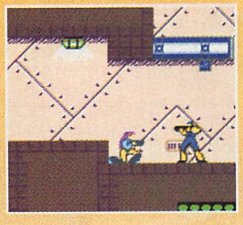
It's easy to master the simple card battle game, but the catalog of cards to hunt down is massive (including characters from all the way back to Athena on the NES), and there are new areas, opponents, and side options to discover even after you become the world's champ. SNK Vs. Capcom won't eat the market alive the way Nintendo's kawaii juggernaut has, but it definitely deserves all the success in the world. **A-**



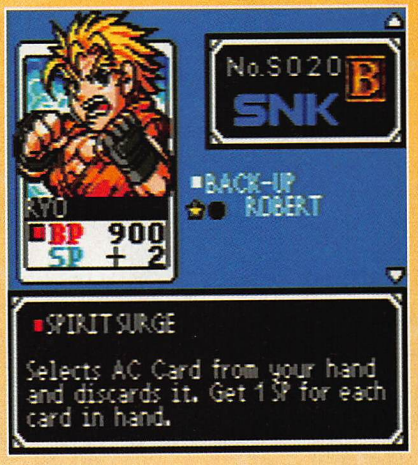


bionic commando dev: nst pub: nintendo avail: now **reviewed by e fear** The newly formed Nintendo Software Technology Corp. (NST) wanted to come out of the gates smoking, and this is their weapon. Based on the arcade and NES games of the same name, they added the option of playing as a female character, and gave both characters slightly different paths through the game. They've packed in tons of character animations, 22 levels to blaze through, and hi-res cut scenes boasting 2048 colors! Like the earlier games, the toughest thing to get used to is the grappling arm you use instead of jumping. With seven different weapons and a sniping mode to take out distant bogeys, it's simple: this is one awesome cart. **A**

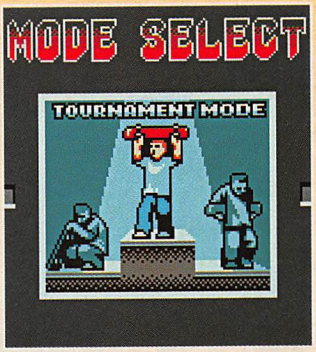


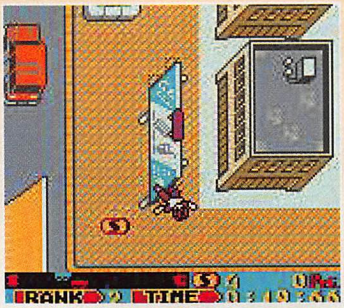


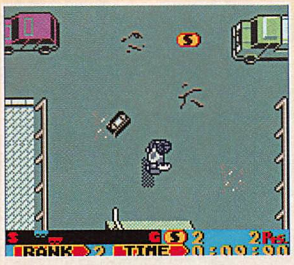


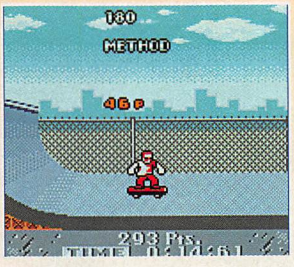


tony hawk's pro skater dev: natsume pub: activision avail: Q4 **previewed by t stratton** Activision doesn't miss a beat and now the Game Boy Color is looking mighty attractive to me, knowing that this game will be out shortly. Tony Hawk and other top-ranked pros will now be able to fit in your backpack and offer three new skating modes: skateboard racing with stunts, head-to-head racing competitions, and half-pipe skateboarding with stunts and tricks. There will be five courses in a variety of environments loaded with jumps, railings and obstacles to finesse. All the skaters found in the big boy systems will appear and players can race against three computer opponents in Tournament mode, or race in one-on-one mode against the computer or a friend (via cable link-up). I can already see kids creating Nollie-to-50/50-to-play GBC grinds out in the schoolyard.

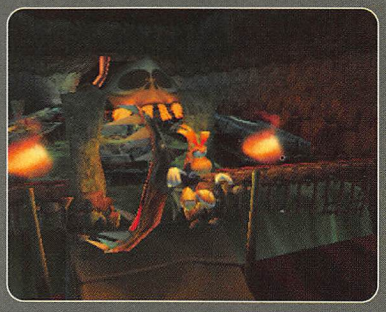


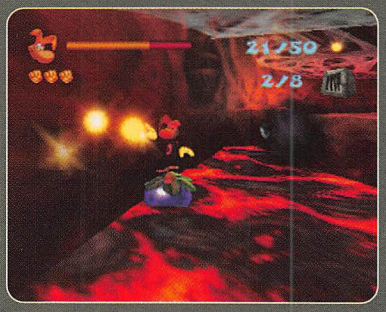




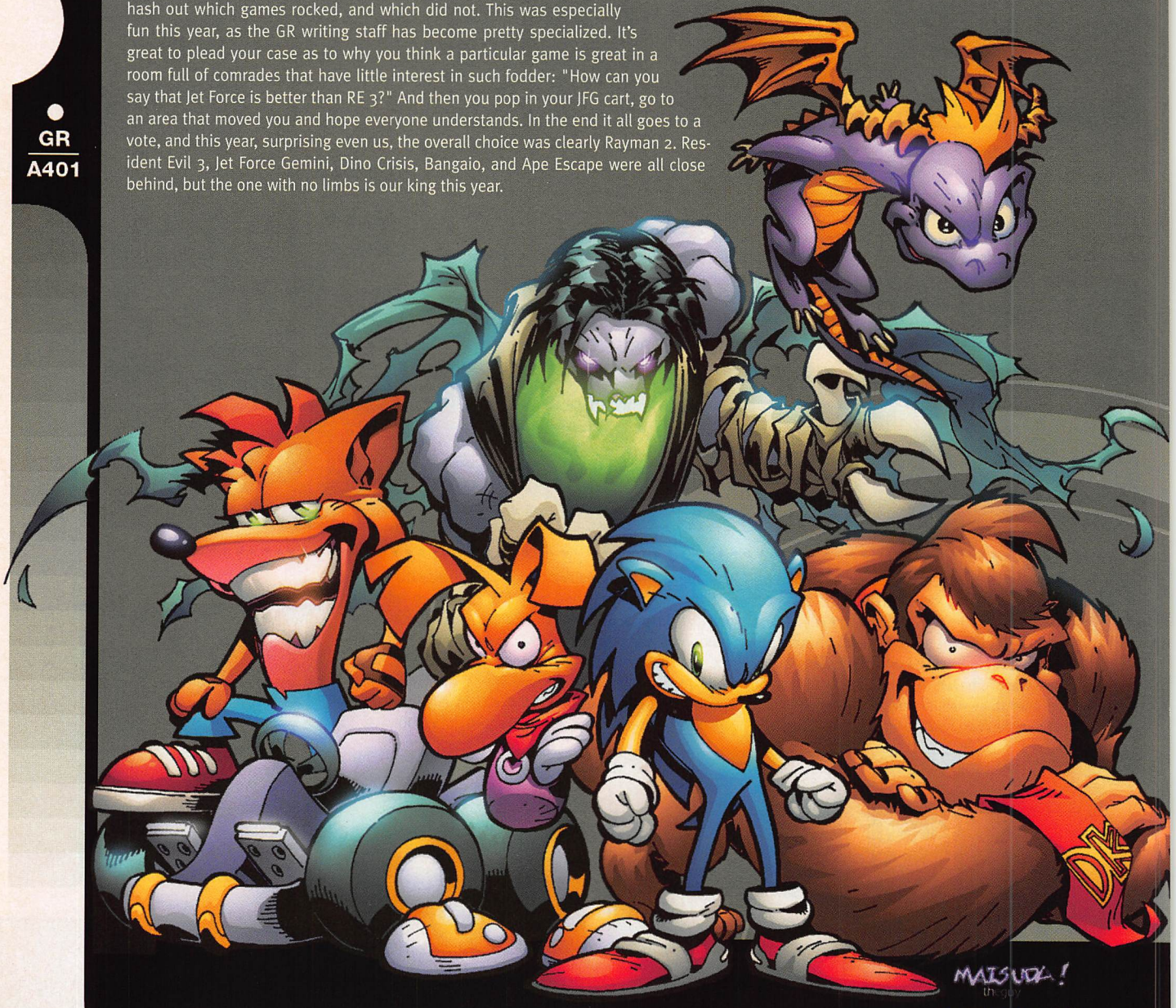


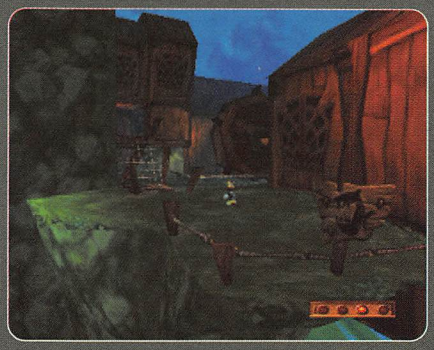
GAMERS' REPUBLIC YEAR IN REVIEW





This is probably our favorite issue to do all year for the explicit reason that we all get to sit in a room and hash out which games rocked, and which did not. This was especially fun this year, as the GR writing staff has become pretty specialized. It's great to plead your case as to why you think a particular game is great in a room full of comrades that have little interest in such fodder: "How can you say that Jet Force is better than RE 3?" And then you pop in your JFG cart, go to an area that moved you and hope everyone understands. In the end it all goes to a vote, and this year, surprising even us, the overall choice was clearly Rayman 2. Resident Evil 3, Jet Force Gemini, Dino Crisis, Bangaio, and Ape Escape were all close behind, but the one with no limbs is our king this year.









Ubi Soft's exquisitely designed 3D update of Rayman gets our nod for 1999 Game of the Year, beating out a lot of great games in a very close race. All the games are virtual masterworks of modern game design, but Rayman 2 was the only one that everyone could agree was perfectly executed from beginning to end.

Most impressive to us was Ubi Soft's ability to capture the lush, fantastical look of the gorgeous 2D original and translate it into the often hard-edged world of polygons without sacrificing the game's ambience. The surreal, whimsical aesthetic sense truly brought something new to the genre that Mario 64 spawned, and its gameplay felt fresh and alive, with diversity and challenge at every turn. So we chose whimsy and delight over scope in awarding this year's honor, and we congratulate all parties involved for pouring their heart and soul into the contenders. We certainly appreciate the effort.



GAMERS' REPUBLIC'S CHOICE FOR

GAME OF THE YEAR 1999

RAYMAN 2

ACTION/ADVENTURE

FIRST PLACE
JET FORCE GEMINI
RARE/NINTENDO 64

SECOND PLACE
DINO CRISIS
CAPCOM/PLAYSTATION

THIRD PLACE
SILENT HILL
KONAMI/PLAYSTATION





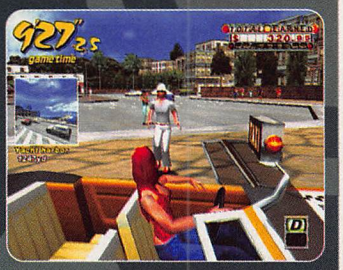


ACTION/ARCADE

FIRST PLACE
CRAZY TAXI
SEGA/DREAMCAST

SECOND PLACE
VIRTUAL ON 2
SEGA/DREAMCAST

THIRD PLACE
SOUL FIGHTER
RED ORB/DREAMCAST







ACTION/PLATFORM

FIRST PLACE
RAYMAN 2
UBI SOFT/NINTENDO 64

SECOND PLACE
DONKEY KONG 64
RARE/NINTENDO 64

THIRD PLACE
EARTHWORM JIM 64
ROCKSTAR/NINTENDO 64







ROLE PLAYING

FIRST PLACE
FINAL FANTASY VIII
SQUARE/PLAYSTATION

SECOND PLACE
CHRONO CROSS
SQUARE/PLAYSTATION

THIRD PLACE
LEGEND OF DRAGOON
SONY/PLAYSTATION







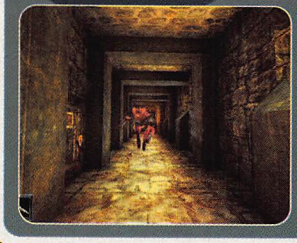
CORRIDOR

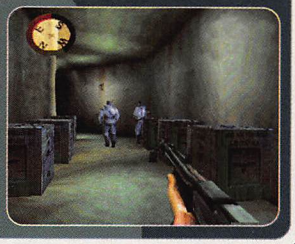
FIRST PLACE
MAKEN X
ATLUS/DREAMCAST

SECOND PLACE
WHEEL OF TIME
LEGEND/PC CD-ROM

THIRD PLACE
MEDAL OF HONOR
DREAMWORKS/PLAYSTATION







SHOOTING

FIRST PLACE
BANGAID
TREASURE/DREAMCAST

SECOND PLACE
R-TYPE DELTA
IREM/PLAYSTATION

THIRD PLACE
OMEGA BOOST
POLYPHONY/PLAYSTATION







PUZZLE

FIRST PLACE
CHU CHU ROCKET
SEGA/DREAMCAST

SECOND PLACE
PUYO PUYON
COMPILE/DREAMCAST

THIRD PLACE
MAGICAL TETRIS
CAPCOM/NINTENDO 64







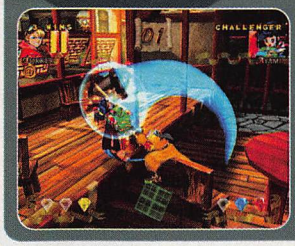
FIGHTING

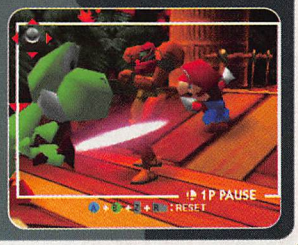
FIRST PLACE
SOUL CALIBUR
NAMCO/DREAMCAST

SECOND PLACE
POWER STONE
CAPCOM/DREAMCAST

THIRD PLACE
SUPER SMASH BROS.
NINTENDO/NINTENDO 64







ARCADE RACING

FIRST PLACE
R4
NAMCO/PLAYSTATION

SECOND PLACE
SEGA RALLY 2
SEGA/DREAMCAST

THIRD PLACE
CRASH TEAM RACING
NAUGHTY DOG/PLAYSTATION







RACING SIMULATION

FIRST PLACE
GRAN TURISMO 2
POLYPHONY/PLAYSTATION

SECOND PLACE
F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX
VIDEO SYSTEM/DREAMCAST

THIRD PLACE
SUPERCROSS CIRCUIT
988 STUDIOS/PLAYSTATION





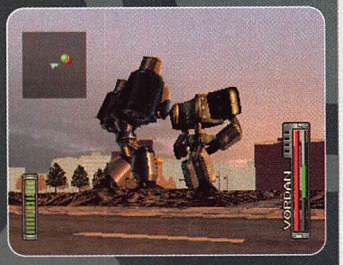


ALTERNATIVE

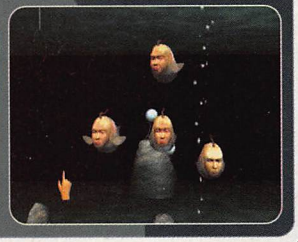
FIRST PLACE
ROBOT DANDY
HUMAN/PLAYSTATION

SECOND PLACE
EVANGELION 64
BANDAI/NINTENDO 64

THIRD PLACE
SEAMAN
VIVARIUM/DREAMCAST







HONORABLE MENTION

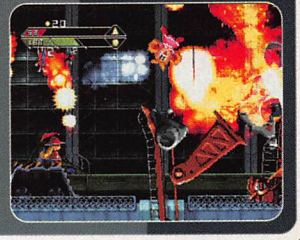
FIRST PLACE
LEGACY OF KAIN
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS/PLAYSTATION

SECOND PLACE
WINBACK
KOEI/NINTENDO 64

THIRD PLACE
SILHOUETTE MIRAGE
TREASURE/PLAYSTATION





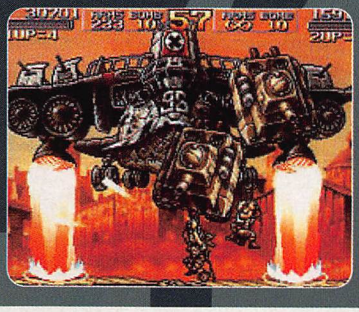


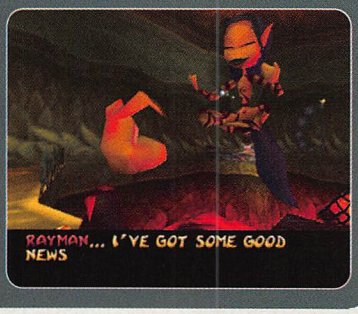
EDITOR'S TOP TEN
DAVE HALVERSON

No real surprises here, I suppose, other than my sole Neo Geo entry and Earthworm Jim's absence. Even after the slaying he's undeservedly received, the worm still just missed my top ten. I must say, though, that I really rallied behind Jet Force Gemini for overall game of the year. Rare finally made the game hard-core gamers have been screaming for and it fell on deaf ears. Miles of genius and (finally) challenging gameplay, Rare's epic Space Opera, aimed at seasoned gamers, was brought to life by a truly compelling ensemble of melodies that flowed perfectly with the game's vastness and challenge. It was spectacular.

1. JET FORCE GEMINI	RARE/NINTENDO 64
2. METAL SLUG X	SNK/NEO GEO
3. RAYMAN 2	UBI SOFT/NINTENDO 64
4. APE ESCAPE	SCEI/PLAYSTATION
5. DONKEY KONG 64	RARE/NINTENDO 64
6. MAKEN X	ATLUS/DREAMCAST
7. SILHOUETTE MIRAGE	TREASURE/PLAYSTATION
8. BERSERK	YUKES/DREAMCAST
9. SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA/DREAMCAST
10. SUPER SMASH BROS.	NINTENDO/NINTENDO 64



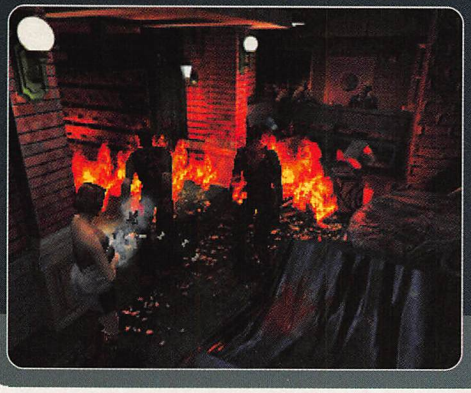


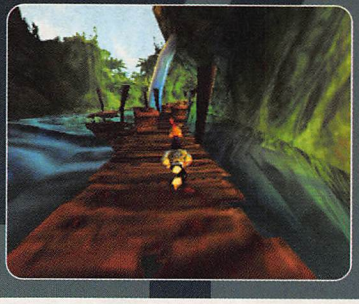


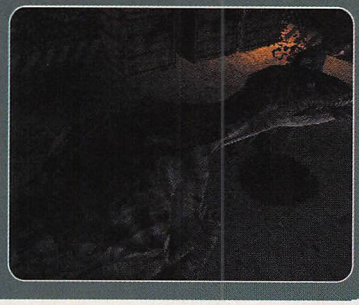
EDITOR'S TOP TEN
BRADY FIECHTER

A year brimming with extraordinary, diverse games, 1999 was an immensely satisfying time for video games. There were no games that reached the soaring level of '98s Zelda 64, but the year as a whole produced every genre at its best, with artistically accomplished triumphs like Rayman 2, Soul Calibur and Resident Evil 3 extending powerful holds in their own unique ways. Note to Nintendo: Next year, I expect a Mario or Metroid on my list.

1. RESIDENT EVIL 3	CAPCOM/PLAYSTATION
2. RAYMAN 2	UBI SOFT/NINTENDO 64
3. DINO CRISIS	CAPCOM/PLAYSTATION
4. SILENT HILL	KONAMI/PLAYSTATION
5. SPYRO 2: RIPTO'S RAGE	INSOMNIAC/PLAYSTATION
6. SOUL REAVER	CRYSTAL DYNAMICS/PLAYSTATION
7. SOUL CALIBUR	NAMCO /DREAMCAST
8. CRASH TEAM RACING	NAUGHTY DOG/PLAYSTATION
9. SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA/DREAMCAST
10. SILHOUETTE MIRAGE	TREASURE/PLAYSTATION





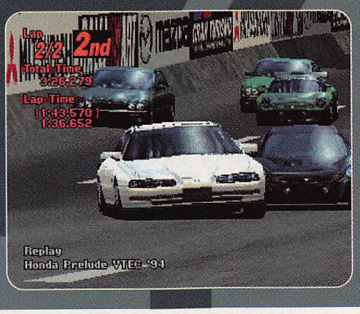


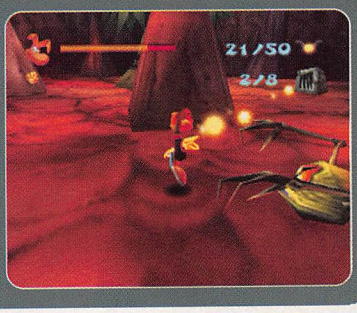
EDITOR'S TOP TEN
MIKE HOBBS

Treasure's delightfully mad, incredibly addictive side-scrolling shooter tops my list this year. While I may have spent more time with other games, none brought me as much pure gameplay joy as Bangaio for the Dreamcast. Brilliantly conceived and typically off the wall, it is the twisted equal of Radiant Silvergun. The rest of my list is fairly obvious, but I would like to mention a game that just missed out, Video System's wonderful F1 World Grand Prix for Dreamcast.

1. BANGAIO	TREASURE/DREAMCAST
2. GRAN TURISMO 2	POLYPHONY DIGITAL/PLAYSTATION
3. RAYMAN 2	UBI SOFT/NINTENDO 64
4. SOUL CALIBUR	NAMCO/DREAMCAST
5. RIDGE RACER TYPE 4	NAMCO/PLAYSTATION
6. DINO CRISIS	CAPCOM/PLAYSTATION
7. DONKEY KONG 64	RARE/NINTENDO 64
8. POWER STONE	CAPCOM/DREAMCAST
9. VIRTUAL ON 2	SEGA/DREAMCAST
10. STREET FIGHTER W IMPACT	CAPCOM/DREAMCAST







EDITOR'S TOP TEN
J.R. HAUGEN

Yipes. After a 16-game playoff system, many good ones had to be omitted, like Soul Calibur, NFL 2K, Pong, Age of Empires II, Tomb Raider 4, Soul Reaver, and Rayman 2. It somehow came out balanced, yet dominated by monkeys. 2000 can only get better. There's PlayStation 2, of course, as well as continuations in classic series. And don't forget the long-awaited Jerry Orbach dancing/fighting RPG going against Shen Mue. Wait, I only dreamed they announced that one.

1. APE ESCAPE	SCEI/PLAYSTATION
2. JET FORCE GEMINI	RARE/NINTENDO 64
3. DONKEY KONG 64	RARE/NINTENDO 64
4. SPYRO 2: RIPTO'S RAGE	INSOMNIAC/PLAYSTATION
5. FINAL FANTASY VIII	SQUARE/PLAYSTATION
6. CHU CHU ROCKET	SONIC TEAM/DREAMCAST
7. BEETLE ADVENTURE RACING	PARADIGM/NINTENDO 64
8. HYPE - THE TIME QUEST	UBI SOFT/PC CD-ROM
9. SPACE CHANNEL 5	SOFT 9/DREAMCAST
10. BALDUR'S GATE	BIOWARE/PC CD-ROM



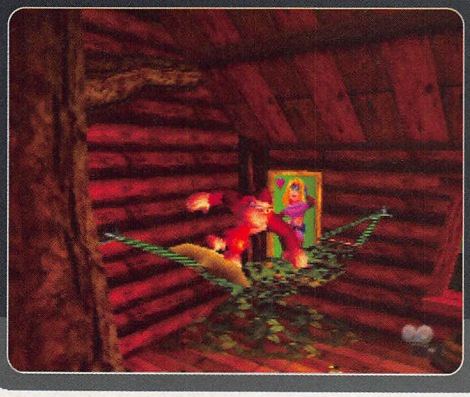




EDITOR'S TOP TEN
MIKE PUCCINI

In 1999, I think that both Rocket and Tony Hawk's Pro Skater took me by surprise the most with superb gaming experiences. The Wheel of Time was hands-down the most beautiful game I've ever played. Mario Golf was an unexpectedly deep game, and Rare pleased all with not one but two humongous, powerhouse titles. For the first time ever, the holiday season was filled with great games for six different platforms (including PC and handhelds).

1. DONKEY KONG 64	RARE/NINTENDO 64
2. WHEEL OF TIME	LEGEND/PC CD-ROM
3. TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER	NEVERSOFT/PLAYSTATION
4. ROCKET	SUCKER PUNCH/NINTENDO 64
5. RAYMAN 2	UBI SOFT/NINTENDO 64
6. JET FORCE GEMINI	RARE/NINTENDO 64
7. DINO CRISIS	CAPCOM/PLAYSTATION
8. SOUL CALIBUR	NAMCO/DREAMCAST
9. MARIO GOLF	CAMELOT/NINTENDO 64
10. SILENT HILL	KONAMI/PLAYSTATION







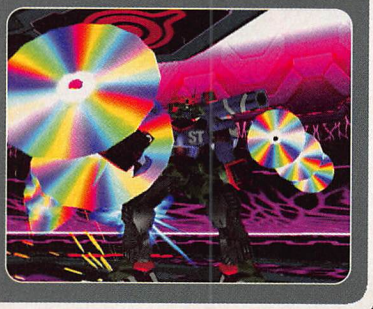
EDITOR'S TOP TEN
DAVE SMITH

If it weren't for one game, I'd write off the Dreamcast in America. Sonic doesn't move me, Sega Rally couldn't match the arcade, but with Soul Calibur, Namco created an unarguable demonstration of the system's power (not to mention their own technical and artistic wizardry). Bangaio is my choice for the year's best, though, given I don't feel comfortable picking a genre specimen. It's a perfectly designed celebration of destruction, 2D shooting excellence distilled as only Treasure can.

1. BANGAIO	TREASURE/DREAMCAST
2. SOUL CALIBUR	NAMCO/DREAMCAST
3. VIRTUAL ON 2	SEGA/DREAMCAST
4. QUAKE 3	ID/PC CD-ROM
5. FINAL FANTASY VIII	SQUARE/PLAYSTATION
6. GRANDIA	GAME ARTS/PLAYSTATION
7. DANCE DANCE REV. 2ND AMX	KONAMI/PLAYSTATION
8. TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER	NEVERSOFT/PLAYSTATION
9. GUITAR FREAKS	KONAMI/PLAYSTATION
10. SNK VS. CAPCOM	SNK/NEO GEO POCKET



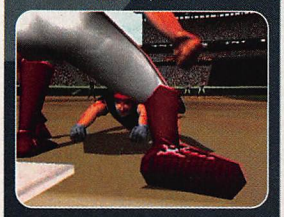




1999's TOP SPORTS GAMES

BASEBALL

FIRST PLACE
ALL STAR BASEBALL 2K
IGUANA/N64

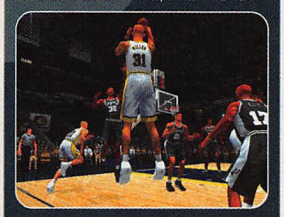


ASB 2000 improved the pitching and batting interface to make it a game casual and enthusiast gamers can enjoy on equal levels. Still loose in areas, but tight overall.

RUNNER UP
MLB 2000
989 SPORTS/PLAYSTATION

BASKETBALL

FIRST PLACE
NBA 2K
VISUAL CONCEPTS/DREAMCAST



Developers are going to have a tough time replicating all of the ambience this game holds. The blood, sweat and tears Visual Concepts put into this game shine through.

RUNNER UP
NBA LIVE 2000
ELECTRONIC ARTS/NINTENDO 64

FOOTBALL

FIRST PLACE
NFL 2K
VISUAL CONCEPTS/DREAMCAST



Never has a sports title launched with a system, though one outing with this gem proves why it was so important to the system's introduction.

RUNNER UP
MADDEN 2000
T*HQ/GAMEBOY COLOR

SOCCER

FIRST PLACE
FIFA 2000
ELECTRONIC ARTS/PLAYSTATION



It took EA awhile, but at the 11th hour they come full circle and deliver an incredible soccer game, surpassing the 3DO in fun, control and response.

RUNNER UP
FIFA 2000
T*HQ/GAMEBOY COLOR

WRESTLING

FIRST PLACE
WRESTLEMANIA 2K
T*HQ/NINTENDO 64

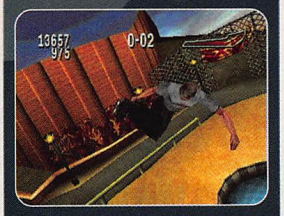


*With the new WWF license, T*HQ shows no bias towards affiliations. Wrestlemania 2000 supplies a solid one-player game on top of the multiplayer madness.*

RUNNER UP
WWF ATTITUDE
IGUANA/DREAMCAST

X-TREME

FIRST PLACE
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER
NEVERSOFT/PLAYSTATION



No other game in any other genre has stirred the type of emotion this game will. It is nearly perfect in every way. The only thing I wish for are more courses.

RUNNER UP
READY 2 RUMBLE
MIDWAY/DREAMCAST

GOLF

FIRST PLACE
MARIO GOLF
CAMELOT/NINTENDO 64

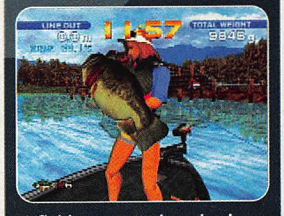


This game conditioned me to wake up extra early get to bed a little bit later, all for the sake of chipping a few strokes off my scorecard. Play with caution.

RUNNER UP
MARIO GOLF
CAMELOT/GAMEBOY COLOR

FISHING

FIRST PLACE
GET BASS
SEGA/DREAMCAST



A fishing game where having a cold 12-pack isn't requisite to full enjoyment, it's easy to get involved with and doubly addicting.

RUNNER UP
BASS HUNTER 64
GEARHEAD/NINTENDO 64

PLAYSTATION

FIRST PLACE
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER
NEVERSOFT/PLAYSTATION

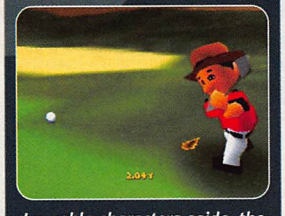


When I'm not playing the game, I think about new lines and combos while out doing other daily chores. Scary, but true.

RUNNER UP
FIFA 2000
ELECTRONIC ARTS/PLAYSTATION

NINTENDO 64

FIRST PLACE
MARIO GOLF
CAMELOT/NINTENDO 64



Loveable characters aside, the physics involved with this game are very compelling, driving you to constantly think about your approach to the hole. I can't get enough of it.

RUNNER UP
WRESTLEMANIA 2K
T*HQ/NINTENDO 64

DREAMCAST

FIRST PLACE
NBA 2K
VISUAL CONCEPTS/DREAMCAST

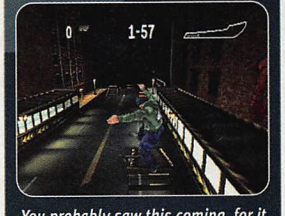


I love this game, not because I am a secret character, and not just for the gameplay itself, but everything that goes on in an arena is re-created phenomenally.

RUNNER UP
NFL 2K
VISUAL CONCEPTS/DREAMCAST

OVERALL

FIRST PLACE
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER
NEVERSOFT/PLAYSTATION



You probably saw this coming, for it is inevitable. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater uses such a kick-ass engine, I would not be surprised to see a BMX or snowboarding game using it. Buy it, if you haven't already..

RUNNER UP
NBA 2K
VISUAL CONCEPTS/DREAMCAST

1999's TOP HANDHELD GAMES

ACTION

FIRST PLACE
METAL SLUG
SNK/NEO POCKET





RUNNER UP
SONIC
SEGA/NEO POCKET

FIGHTING

FIRST PLACE
SNK MILLENNIUM
SNK/NEO POCKET





RUNNER UP
SAMURAI SHOWDOWN
SNK/NEO POCKET

ROLE PLAYING

FIRST PLACE
POKEMON YELLOW
NINTENDO/GB COLOR





RUNNER UP
SURVIVAL KIDS
KONAMI/GB COLOR

PUZZLE

FIRST PLACE
CRUSH ROLLER
SNK/NEO POCKET



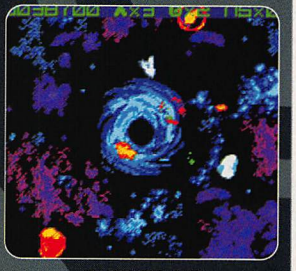


RUNNER UP
PUZZLE BOBBLE MINI
SNK/NEO POCKET

SHOOTING

FIRST PLACE
R-TYPE
IREM/GB COLOR





RUNNER UP
ASTEROIDS
SYROX/GB COLOR

SPORTS

FIRST PLACE
MARIO GOLF
NINTENDO/GB COLOR





RUNNER UP
BASEBALL STARS
SNK/NEO POCKET

HANDHELD GAME OF THE YEAR

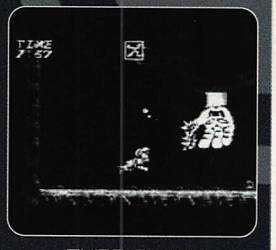
SNK's Metal Slug has to go down as the best arcade-to-handheld conversion ever, with its fluid animation, assorted military tanks, planes, and machines of destruction. The game features a built-in save (respect), has loads of parallax (double respect), and carries with it all of the great run 'n' gun, dodging, platforming, and big boss fighting of the arcade original. May we please have Magician Lord now... Please. Pretty please.

FIRST PLACE
METAL SLUG
SNK/NEO POCKET





SECOND PLACE
SAMURAI SHODOWN
SNK/NEO POCKET



THIRD PLACE
GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS
CAPCOM/WONDER SWAN

1999's TOP GAMES BY PLATFOAM

DREAMCAST GAME OF THE YEAR

Words can barely express how utterly astounding Soul Calibur is. Right off the bat, here was a game that showed what the Dreamcast is made of. Seamless animation, beautiful lighting and color, and a framerate that's perfectly smooth. SC has set the standard, and now it's up to the developers to keep us happy. Sega may have been mortally wounded by the Saturn, but the soul still burns.

FIRST PLACE
SOUL CALIBUR
NAMCO/NAMCO





SECOND PLACE
SONIC ADVENTURE
SEGA/SEGA

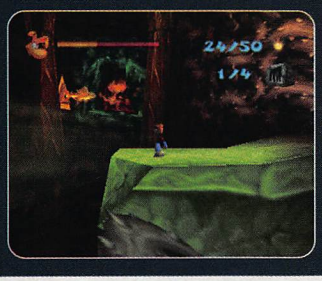


THIRD PLACE
BANGAID
TREASURE/ESP

NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE YEAR

Rayman stands alone atop a heap of great Nintendo games of '99. Ubi Soft has shown the world that dedication to quality is still king in the video-game industry. By giving Michael Ancel and company the time and resources needed, they crafted another magical adventure and somehow stayed true to one of the most fantastical 2D landscapes ever drawn. Just amazing. Our thanks.

FIRST PLACE
RAYMAN 2
UBI SOFT/UBI SOFT





SECOND PLACE
JET FORCE GEMINI
RARE/NINTENDO



THIRD PLACE
DONKEY KONG 64
RARE/NINTENDO

PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE YEAR

The PlayStation featured an impressive batch of games this year, and the best of all had to be Ape Escape. Exquisitely blending hardcore play mechanics with bright, cartoony visuals, it contrasted sharply with the darker-themed Dino Crisis and Silent Hill, which were just barely edged out by the only monkey-capturing game in town. Here's hoping for more when PlayStation 2 arrives.

FIRST PLACE
APE ESCAPE
SCEI/SONY





SECOND PLACE
DINO CRISIS
CAPCOM/CAPCOM



THIRD PLACE
SILENT HILL
KONAMI/KONAMI

PC GAME OF THE YEAR

Deciding on the best PC games of 1999 was a difficult task. There were just too many great games. Wheel of Time can almost stand on its beauty alone, but it's ambience is wickedly effective. Baldur's Gate is the RPG PC gamers have always thirsted for, and Hype brings an amazing soundtrack to the table, as well as a lush wonderfully designed action/RPG setting.

FIRST PLACE
WHEEL OF TIME
LEGEND/GT INTERACTIVE





SECOND PLACE
BALDUR'S GATE
BIOWARE/INTERPLAY



THIRD PLACE
HYPE-THE TIME QUEST
UBI SOFT/UBI SOFT



BEST NEW CHARACTER

VELA



Vela was downright groundbreaking for a mainstream Nintendo female. Donning bouncing D cups, a miniskirt, big anime eyes, and a lethal arsenal of big guns, she's a sure sign that RARE and Nintendo know that there's life after age 12.

BEST ORIGINAL CONCEPT

FIRST PLACE
APE ESCAPE
SCEI/PLAYSTATION



RUNNER UP
SEAMAN
SEGA/DREAMCAST



Ape Escape brought a previously unseen level of play mechanics to a genre that sorely needed them. Implementing such genius as a capture system, enemy radar, RC car puzzles, all types of water gear, flying hats, and on and on, no two levels were quite alike.

BEST EFFECTS

SOUL CALIBUR
NAMCO/DREAMCAST



Every aspect of Soul Calibur was a crowning achievement.

BEST PERIPHERAL

ASCII PAD FT
ASCII/DREAMCAST



As is usually the case, ASCII again has come to the rescue with the answer to the Dreamcast fighting-game dilemma. This sturdy 6-button pad has a killer D-pad, high-set buttons that take a pounding and never go flat, and even features a vibration on/off switch. Agetec will undoubtedly bring this pad Stateside very soon, if they haven't already. Don't hesitate to fork out the dough on this one. You'll need it for the exquisite SF III W Impact.

BIGGEST LETDOWN

N64 Castlevania
Konami/N64

Why is Castlevania 64, which was a decent game, letdown of the year? Because "decent," when it comes to Castlevania, isn't nearly good enough. This is a franchise that year in and year out has stirred the soul, and it's one of the few remaining from the great old days of 8-bit. Heavy fog, sluggish gameplay, no whip, no Medusa heads, no candles...this was not Castlevania. Resurrect us Konami.

BEST COMMERCIAL



What else would you expect from the biggest launch in video-game history? Sega's "Apocalypse" commercial featuring Agent S stands as the single greatest video-game commercial of all time. It was *The Matrix* meets *Akira*.

SOUNDTRACK



There are moments in JFG, like the one shown here in the water ruin, where emotion takes over, thanks to one of the best N64 soundtracks ever heard.

CONSOLE OF THE YEAR

The N64 may have hosted our game of the year, but the PlayStation had every genre covered with a number of extraordinary titles. In its dominant five-year run, the PS has seen its finest year, with sequels like Final Fantasy VIII, Gran Turismo 2 and Resident Evil 3 giving us more of what we love. Perhaps more than anything else, this was finally a system that truly supported RPGs.



GAME RELATED ACTION FIGURE

Player-one and -two Alex from Resaurus' Street Fighter III line is a big, thick, chunk of action figure, wonderfully sculpted, nicely articulated, and well painted. He even has flexible overalls and hair pieces and comes with a cool stand and a sticker. You can pretty much consider the other five as runners up, especially Blanka.



ZENKI FX

[publisher] NEC
[genre] action/platform
[system] PC FX
[year] 1996









In the mood for a little anime with your 2d sprite-based action? If so, there's only one way to go-Zenki Fx. Unfortunately it's one of only two decent action games for the rare system, so unless you're a collector or hard-core fan, I suppose this GRkive will have to do.

GRKIVES

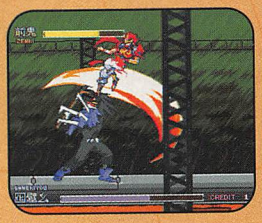
<<retro video game assimilation>>

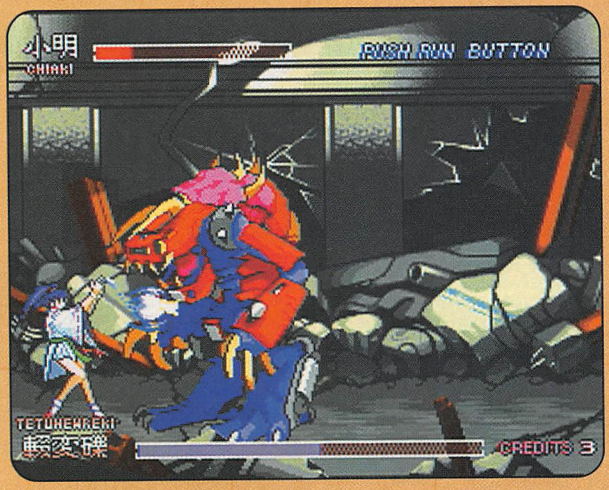
gr001

In happier times, when gaming was still pure, NEC was a big part of our lives. With games like Bonk's Adventure, Y's, Legendary Axe, Dead Moon, Ninja Spirit, Spriggan, and...well, you get the point. NEC was a cool company. So when they finally entered the next-generation system wars with their PC FX, back when the Saturn and PlayStation were new concepts, I was excited. Would this be the machine that would save 2D? It certainly had unique capabilities. Rather than pushing polys, NEC fixed their gaze on video compression, allowing them to integrate smooth, artifact-free animation sequences into traditional gaming venues. Problem was, by the time it hit, the world had gone polygon crazy and no one wanted anything to do with what should have been a much-celebrated new system. One look at it and you knew it was something special. But its days were numbered, and I knew it. I did manage to grab a couple of real collector's items before the system slipped into T&A gaming history (where all Japanese systems go before they perish), including Team Innocent (the first Resident Evil-style game ever) and the game you see here, Zenki FX, a side-scrolling action game based on a popular anime series. While Zenki may look like a good 16-bit game in screen shots, realize that at every turn, without ever loading, real-time anime windows shoot in and out, complete with quality dialogue. The game also features big, nicely animated sprites, layers and layers of parallax, and even a few rendered elements. It's the ultimate old-school romp. Of course, to play it you'll need to find a PC FX, which shouldn't be all that difficult now that the Net's around to save us. If you're thinking about hunting for a PC FX, you can gather a ton of intel at pcenginefx.com. For my money, this is definitely a system worth owning, even if there are only a handful of quality titles for you to play. Happy gaming! **D. HALVERSON**





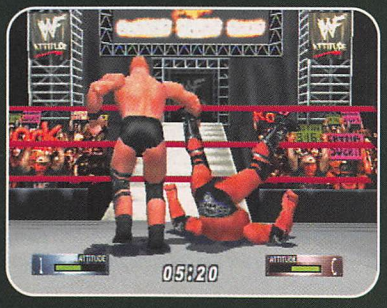




Now, wrestling doesn't really contain the no-nonsense attitude that versus fighting does, but when the sport can be replicated as well as this, it doesn't matter. WWF Wrestlemania 2000 is so damn fun, one not need be a conditioned television viewer to enjoy the mayhem. The front-end is very easy to navigate and the presentation in introducing each of the wrestlers stirs all sorts of emotion, whether it makes you laugh or gets you pumped up.





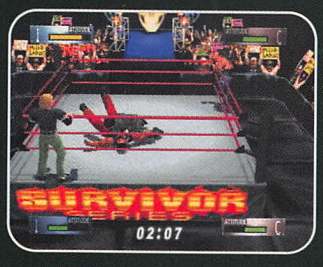




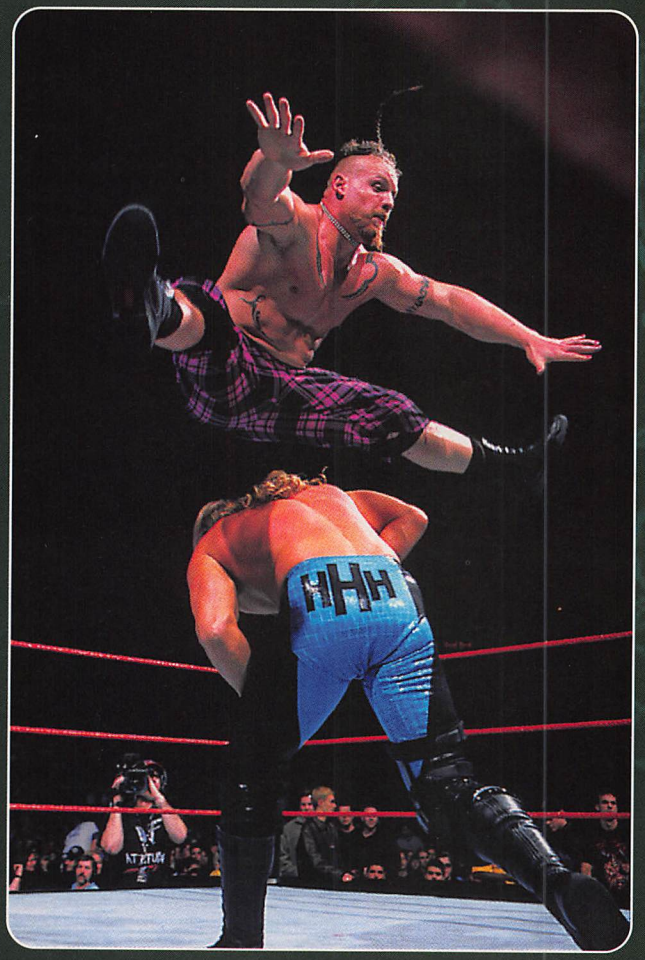
Graphically, the game falls a bit short of spectacular. Models are disjointed at times and the wrestlers' faces are awkward-looking due to the lack of polys. But these shortcomings do not affect the amount of fun the game generates at all. The reason why is that the control and response are tight: When you enter a command, it doesn't take a few moments to see the reaction onscreen. Positioning your character is fluid and executing the moves is intuitive and never becomes frustrating. Playing the game is done with the digital pad, and snapping the analog stick at the appropriate time will activate a patented signature move, unique to the wrestler you are using. When playing in tag-team matches, players can double-team a foe by using cooperative moves, and when fighting outside the ring, the ever-popular foreign object can be found and used, bringing the excitement to even higher levels.

Create-a-wrestler is back, as it should be, allowing players to mix and match body parts along with mapping new button commands to their newly created counterparts. Moves that fit the type of wrestler you create will be accessible: smaller, lighter wrestlers will be able to choose from the more technical moves, while big wrestlers come equipped with the sensational moves. Toying around with this feature alone can take an afternoon. The game is geared towards multiplayer action, but with the inclusion of career mode, a lonely gunman will be able to raise the roof and genuinely enjoy it.

I am not a wrestling fanatic. I do not follow the drama. The only Chyna I know is in the Far East and the only Steve Austin I know was the Six Million Dollar Man. That said, I really enjoy this game and the atmosphere it brews. Those who are regimented to the WWF will go nuts with this title. **GR**







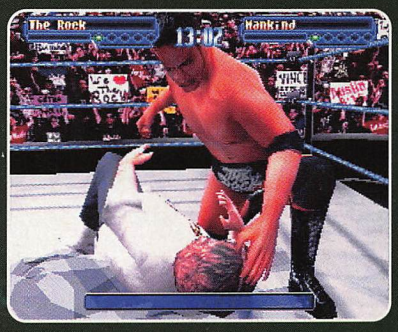
gamers' republic sports '99

WRESTLEMANIA 2000

developer: asmik publisher: thq available: now







gamers' republic sports '99

WWF SMACKDOWN

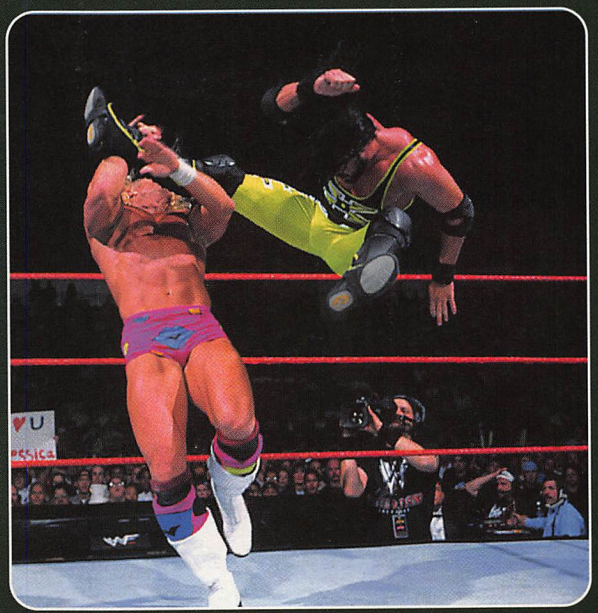
developer: yukes publisher: thq available: february

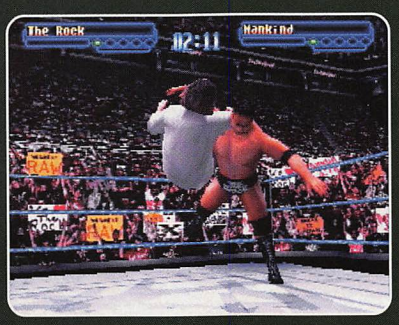
Let me start by saying that come February 2000, WWF Smackdown will be hailed as the best wrestling game ever for the PlayStation. Recently we got the chance to talk to Sanders Lee, the producer of this unbelievable game, to find out more about the game's new features and take advantage of more hands-on gameplay. The game is being developed by Yukes, established in Japan for their great Toukon Retsuden titles, also known as All Japan Pro Wrestling. They are using the same engine as their latest Japanese release, Toukon Retsuden 4, and completely tricking it out to replicate the American sport.

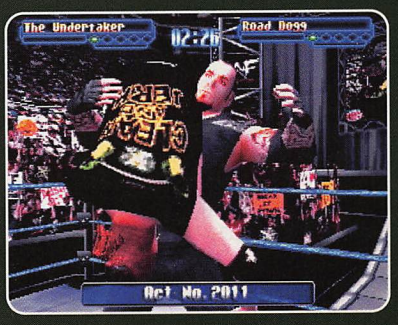
Sanders is a huge wrestling fan and understands how to balance the look, feel and presentation. Given that this is T*HQ's tenth wrestling effort, he is taking the game on location to show the different WWF Superstars how progress is going and to get their feedback. As we sat in the conference room, Sanders booted up the game to show me just what the design team has achieved. The front-end is very efficient and the load times between each screen are quick. Although most play modes were not in yet, he rolled through Survival, Single, Tag and Cage Match options, then noted that a Special Referee mode was being implemented. The idea is that two players fight head-to-head and a third player takes the roll of referee. The ref can interfere, run slow counts and pick up the pace to call quick counts. Why no one has thought of doing this before is perplexing, but it's here now, so no complaints.

The second and most striking concept Smackdown has to offer is the ability to take the action backstage. During a match a player can walk back up the runway through to the lobby. The best thing about this transition is that it doesn't take the second player to comply in order to switch areas. If you walk back through the curtains, the game will automatically bring the action into the new area. Once in the lobby, players can delve deeper into the madness by walking out into the parking garage or boiler room. Between matches, cinemas will also take place inside these areas, bringing even more of the drama full circle.

Through the use of awesome lighting effects, each area looks great, though no matter what venue you are wrestling in, the backstage areas are always the same; this is not a complaint, just an observation. The action is extremely fast and the camera logic has been set to deliver a telecast feel. All parties involved are bringing everything they can offer to the table, and their efforts are proving to be recognized. The game is still set for a February release, and television marketing will undoubtedly be huge. Check out more developments about WWF Smackdown at www.gamersrepublic.com. GR







The game flaunts some slick hand-drawn animations throughout. Check out The Rock, laying the smacketh down on Mankind's candy-ass!





First released on Model 2 hardware in the arcades, then re-released using Naomi hardware, Virtua Striker 2 comes home to the Dreamcast to prove once again Sega and the DC have the power to duplicate arcade titles to the poly count. Many might not have seen or bothered to try this game at the arcade, which is a shame. It holds true to the action and feeling of a real soccer game and simplifies play mechanics to make the experience no frills and all fun.

The game offers two-player head-to-head matches in arcade mode and up to 32 players in the tournament mode. When playing the game alone, one can volley the ball in league, ranking mode, match play and international cup to keep the game refreshing and increase long-term value. To go along with the six play modes are six stadiums, non-specific and random to each game played. These arenas do go through variations as the time of day and weather affect field and light conditions.

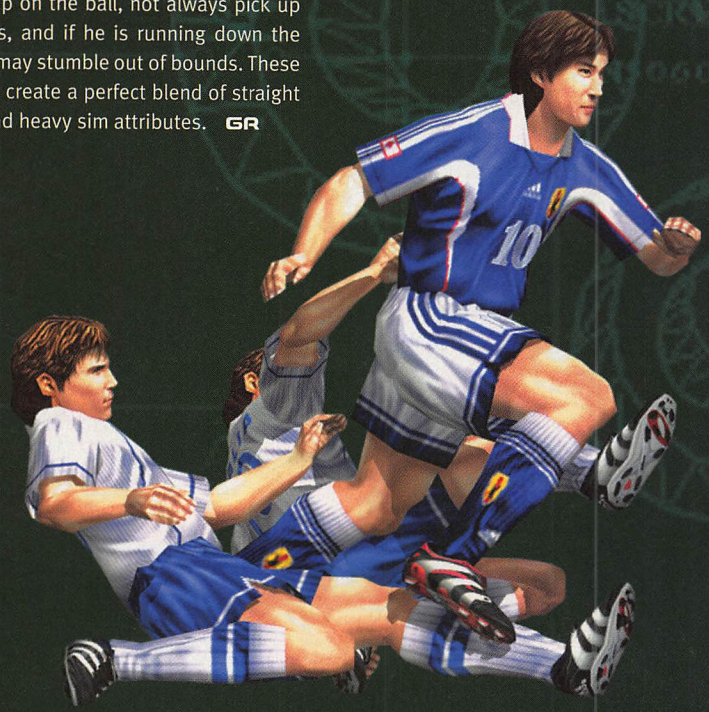
Games might start with fair weather, only to slowly start to snow and gradually blanket the field in white. A virtual clock will display the span of one day, from morning to night. It is even possible to increase the speed of the clock to have an afternoon game stretch into the late night and vise-versa. These small features add even more to the whole game. Included with these subtle touches are some great 3D-player models and incredible motion-capture animations. Everything runs at a very comfortable 60 frames per second and the speed and technique of individual players are simulated to the cleat size.



Your first go with the game may prove to be laboring. Keeping control of the ball, working it down field and setting up a goal opportunity is challenging. The game is structured for quick, arcade action, but the players react and respond true to real-life circumstances. If a player's momentum is traveling in one direction and he goes to shift in the opposite, it will take a few steps and a wider turn to accomplish it. Players will trip up on the ball, not always pick up on a pass, and if he is running down the sideline, may stumble out of bounds. These obstacles create a perfect blend of straight arcade and heavy sim attributes. GR



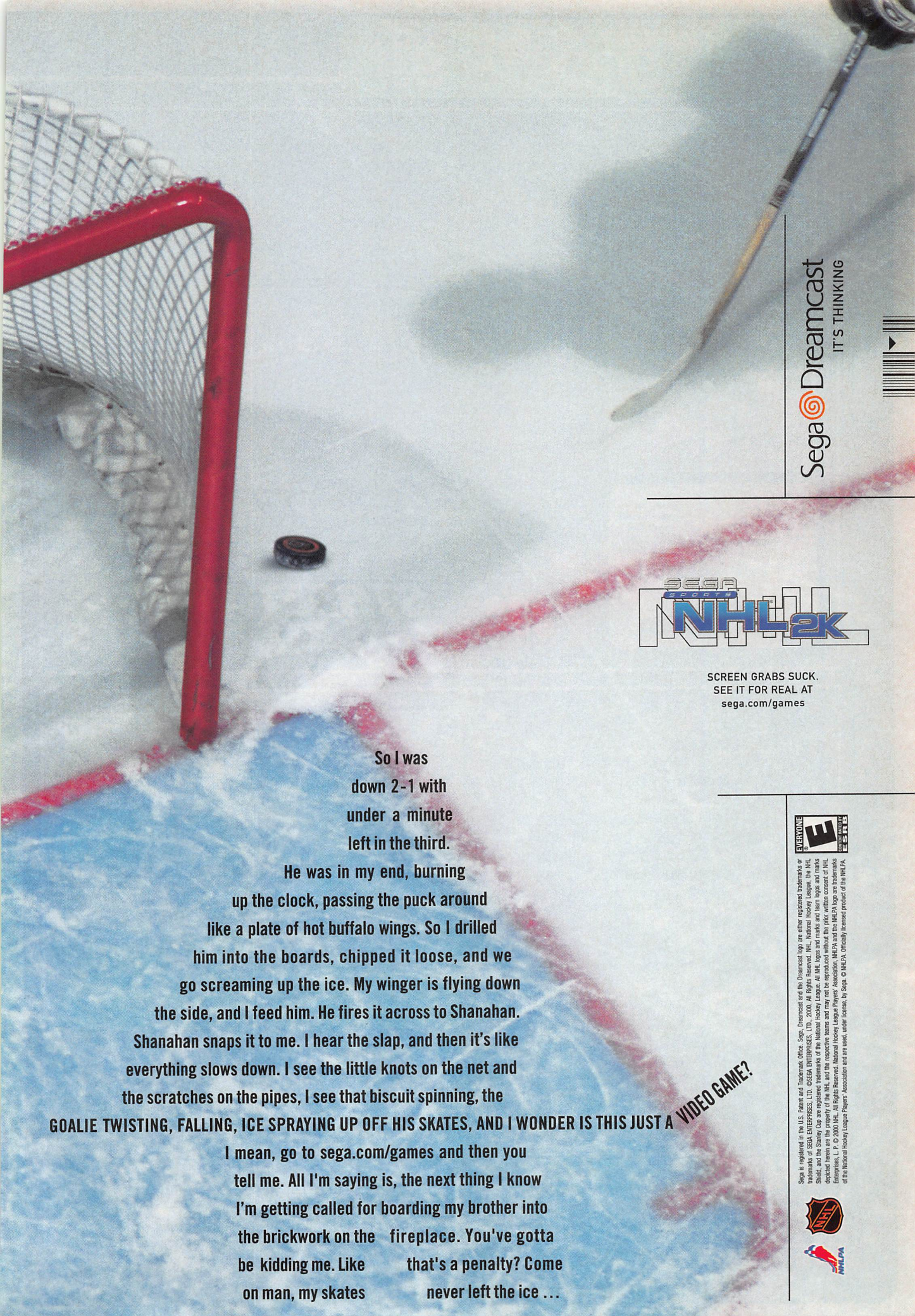




gamers' republic sports '99

VIRTUA STRIKER 2

developer: genki publisher: sega available: february



Sega Dreamcast
IT'S THINKING

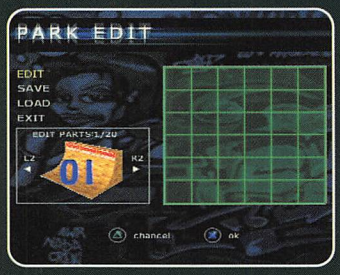
SEGA SPORTS NHL 2K

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So I was
down 2-1 with
under a minute
left in the third.
He was in my end, burning
up the clock, passing the puck around
like a plate of hot buffalo wings. So I drilled
him into the boards, chipped it loose, and we
go screaming up the ice. My winger is flying down
the side, and I feed him. He fires it across to Shanahan.
Shanahan snaps it to me. I hear the slap, and then it's like
everything slows down. I see the little knots on the net and
the scratches on the pipes, I see that biscuit spinning, the
GOALIE TWISTING, FALLING, ICE SPRAYING UP OFF HIS SKATES, AND I WONDER IS THIS JUST A VIDEO GAME?
I mean, go to sega.com/games and then you
tell me. All I'm saying is, the next thing I know
I'm getting called for boarding my brother into
the brickwork on the fireplace. You've gotta
be kidding me. Like that's a penalty? Come
on man, my skates never left the ice ...

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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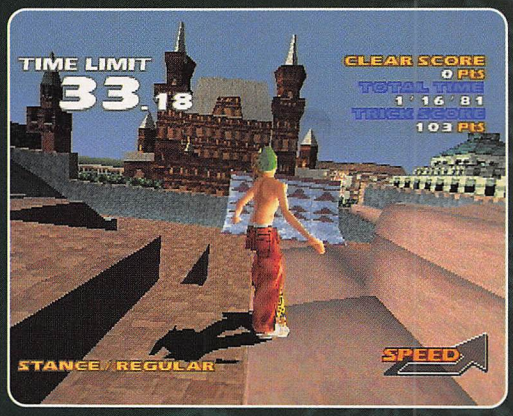




Street Sk8r was the PlayStation's first skateboarding game. It featured a bunch of fictional characters and a lot of moves, but was extremely shallow in play modes and mechanics, not to mention the game seemed to have trouble handling the stunted visuals—not an award-winning set of components. Still, somehow the game attracted a decent crowd.

First impressions don't have me swapping out my all-time favorite skateboarding game, but an interesting feature does raise my brow—the ability to create your own street course. It consists of a rather large empty lot and you get to drop tiles of ramps and rails, position them where you like, and once you are done, save them to a memory card. This single aspect definitely causes extreme interest; it's a gimmick that will undoubtedly make or break the game.

In the works is a four-player game, which concerns this 7-ply magician. Let's hope the effort to create a four-player game doesn't hinder the single-payer mode. **GR**



gamers' republic sports '00

STREET SK8R 2

developer: micro cabin publisher: electronic arts available: march

When the original Hot Shots Golf hit the market last year, I passed on the purchase and let others tell me how cool and accurately the game replicated golf, even if it hosted a cast of top-heavy swingers. Then came another golf game, for another system, by the same developers with the same sort of cute memorable characters and I was all over it...go figure. Now comes the sequel to this game I ridiculed because of its big-headed characters and I pop it in to see...they're gone!

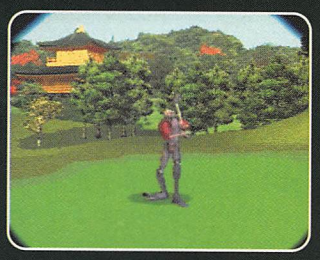
As a result of decisions I swear did not involve me, Hot Shots Golf 2 is back with cartoony, but not super-deformed, characters. Along with this new cast of prerendered caddies are some third-party mascots like Gex, and Sir Dan of MediEvil fame. Smart move, Sony.

Developed by a new team, Clap Hanz, a division of Sony Computer Entertainment, Hot Shots 2 uses a slightly tweaked version of the original Camelot engine. The greens are very attractive, the interface is simple, and the ball control has been delicately improved, making it easier to judge how it will handle during an 18-hole course.

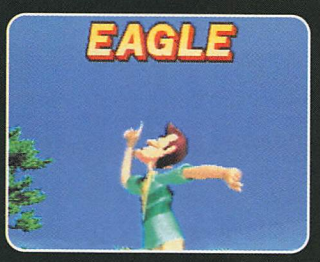
A new nine-hole/par-3 course is the perfect play-and-go option. **GR**











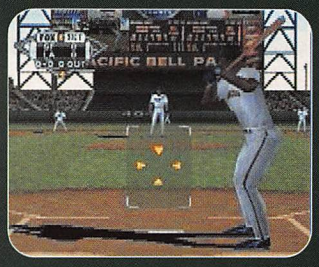


The prerendered characters and real-time backdrops complement each nicely. And yes, the game plays as good as it looks.

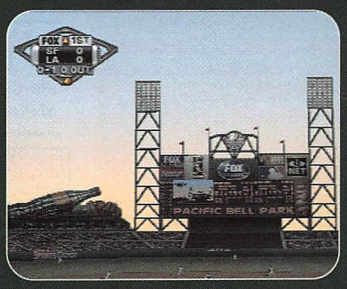
gamers' republic sports '00

HOT SHOTS 2

developer: clap hanz publisher: scea available: march



Hot off the heels of their Basketball and Hockey titles, FOX Sports is ready to take you to the diamond. These are the first shots available for Major League Baseball 2001, which is being developed by Fox internally. By just looking at it, MLB 2001 looks as good as, if not better than, other games well into their fourth incarnation. Apparently the game runs using the PS hi-res mode and has an advanced physics engine that takes advantage of player momentum. Expect the patented FOX presentation and look of a broadcast, including "Sounds of the Game" and the "FOX Scope." Other than the traditional features, there is a create/edit player option and roster management. I haven't actually been able to play the game yet, but the shots make me extremely excited to do so. MLB 2001 will be the one to follow come spring time. **GR**

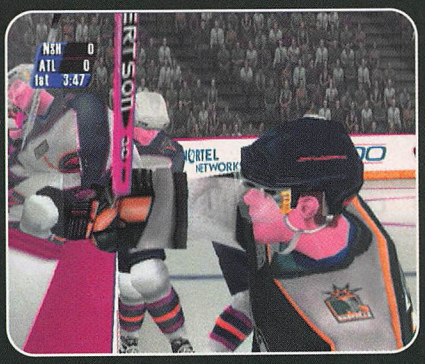


gamers' republic sports '00

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2001

developer/publisher: FOX sports available: spring 2000

It's finally here...well almost. But it's very playable and very fun. I am all about the Sega Sports games and NHL 2K just solidifies my enthusiasm. As the shots prove, the game is nothing short of spectacular. So I'll save the space for giving a heads-up on gameplay, 'cause that's what it is all about. If you have played the Genesis Hockey games from yesteryear, you will wonder how you adjusted to the games out there today. The 60-fps, motion capturing and great camera logic are tooled in great harmony. The game is still in its alpha stage, so I'll reserve any concerns until a more complete version is in my possession. Regardless, the game is obviously going to do much respect for Sega Sports. **GR**



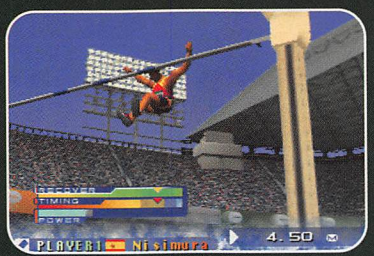


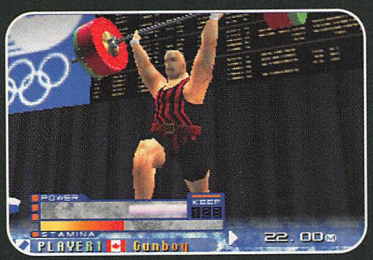
gamers' republic sports '00

NHL 2K

developer: black box publisher: sega available: april

I am not a big fan of the button-mashing, breaking-a-sweat-for-no-good-reason type of game. Which is exactly what this game is. However, the presentation this time around really does justice to the different events. The camera will zoom in or out, pan around, and generally lend the look of a telecast. For this reason alone I found myself playing the game longer than I would have. Many of the events you might remember are back once again: new ones like Trap Shooting and Horizontal Bar provide a refreshing new take on tension-building, muscle-straining gameplay. Who knows, by the time the final version rolls through I might be ready to break a few video-game world records. Either that or I'll have developed Carpel Tunnel syndrome. **GR**





gamers' republic sports '00

INTL. TRACK & FIELD 2000

developer/publisher: konami available: april

world republic

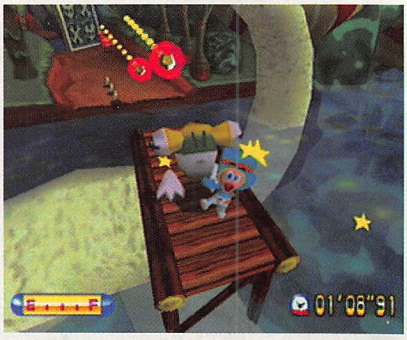
電気製品

[i] It's a month of oddball titles in World Republic this time around. We have first looks at several titles, like Genki's fearfully original Niu Niu and Mahou's sports games for the PlayStation 2, final judgment on Bandai's Vampire Hunter D, and a preview of the very bright future of PlayStation RPGs: both Chrono Cross and Legend of Dragoon will make it to the U.S. someday soon.

World Republic Preview • developer/publisher **genki** • available in japan **feb**

super magnetic niuniu

Classic 3D action, innovative puzzles, and inimitably bizarre character design.

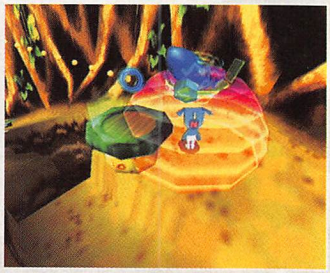


Here is another pure action game for Dreamcast. Super Magnetic Niuniu comes to us from Genki, developers of Tokyo Xtreme Racer and an occasional conversion house for Sega, having handled DC versions of Virtua Fighter 3 and Virtua Striker 2.

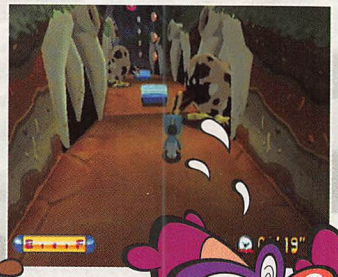
In their latest game, you play as Niuniu, a robot that fights for justice using magnetic fields against the Pinko family, who've captured a big amusement park, Pao Pao Park, with an evil robot called Pinko-Robo. In the Niuniu world, most characters have either a north- or south-pole characteristic, so, for example, when enemies in front of Niuniu have a north pole characteristic, you can use the north-pole button to attract and catch them. Also in the Niuniu world, there are a lot of traps called Jiba (magnetic in Japanese) Gimmicks, which have different magnetic field types such as a pendulum, a jumping plate, a switch, etc. So when a north-pole pendulum is in front of you, you can use your south-pole ability to catch it, and use north-pole to release it.

This cute action game will be released in February 2000 in Japan. Although a U.S. release has not yet been announced, the possibility is there that it will find its way here in some form. **GR**







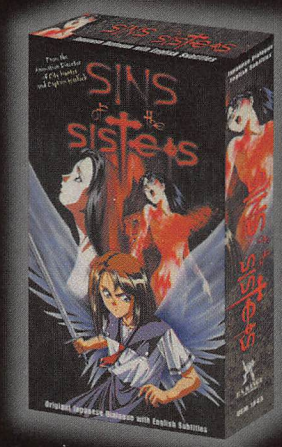


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World Republic Interview • with Hirotake Tsukamoto • Nintendo/Recruit

Randnet 64 DD

The Dolphin looms, but Recruit and Nintendo plan to create a community apart.



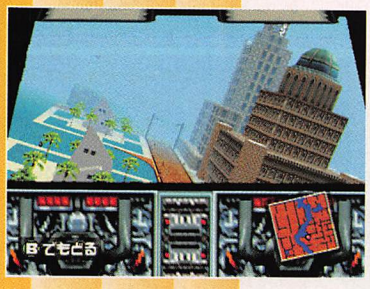
GAMERS' REPUBLIC: SEEING AS HOW THE DOLPHIN IS NOW SLATED FOR RELEASE IN 2000, WHAT GOALS DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THE 64DD?

Hirotake Tsukamoto: First of all, RandnetDD is composed of equal parts of Nintendo and Recruit. Thus, please understand that I'm not completely filled in on plans for the Dolphin. However, I can say that the most important, unique characteristic of the DD is the fact that it's re-writable, meaning that you can modify the existing data in your games or save additional game data. It is clear that the Dolphin will use DVD media, but it's not yet certain whether or not it will use DVD-Ram, although there's a slight possibility of that. Therefore, our goal is to offer a new world of games that use the strengths of rewritable disk media and network communication. The service we are going to provide is the latest one involving the use of networked home consoles, although the DD is still a peripheral device connected to the N64, and not the next-generation machine that the PlayStation 2 and Dolphin are.

GR: HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN TO RELEASE GAMES FOR THE 64DD?

HT: We will continue the existing offer even after the Dolphin is launched.





GR: NINTENDO HAS SOLD SUPER FAMICOM (SUPER NINTENDO) GAMES VIA A SERVICE AT LAWSON CONVENIENCE STORES, WHERE PLAYERS CAN DOWNLOAD A GAME INTO A BLANK SF MEMORY CARTRIDGE. WILL RANDNETDD REPLACE THIS SERVICE, OR OFFER DOWNLOADABLE GAMES IN A SIMILAR WAY?

HT: Maybe. We have studied plans for offers involving net delivery and store terminal regarding the rewriting of data. Offering network downloads will be our first service. While I think that we can announce something about providing a data rewriting service using store terminals, we haven't decided whether we are going to use those existing terminals.

GR: WHY WAS THE DD DELAYED FOR SO LONG?

HT: Plans for the DD have become more and more ambitious ever since Nintendo launched the N64. Considering the time taken to develop the network service, and officially build the joint corporation called RandnetDD [which was announced June 30, 1999], I suppose that the DD was not delayed that long.

GR: DO YOU PLAN TO ALLOW THIRD PARTIES TO DEVELOP EROTIC GAMES FOR THE 64DD?

HT: Fundamentally, the DD is a service using N64. As you know, N64 users [in Japan] are mainly elementary or junior high school students. Since we can't disregard this fact, we are not going to release erotic games indiscriminately. Furthermore, when you access the Internet using the DD, websites with erotic or violent cannot be accessed by children under the default setting. Now that I've said this, I'm not sure if you're asking, "Will you never allow erotic games on the system?" [Laugh] Since the basis of the Randnet service concept is to create a community on the Internet, we might possibly allow the development of erotic games if the majority of the Randnet community was interested in this.

GR: WILL THERE STILL BE VERSIONS OF MOTHER 3 AND ZELDA FOR THE DD, OR ARE THOSE GAMES EXCLUSIVELY CARTRIDGE-BASED NOW?

HT: That's a question for Nintendo, really...although I have heard that a version of Zelda will be released for the DD.

GR: CAN WE PLAY 64DD GAMES IN AMERICA? WILL IT OPERATE PROPERLY WITH A U.S. N64?

HT: The Randnet service is only available inside Japan. We are not planning overseas services at present.

GR: WHAT ARE SOME ACTION GAMES IN DEVELOPMENT CURRENTLY?

HT: A pure action game is absent from our lineup for now, if Zelda is an action-RPG, although I think that Zelda is an action game—well, there aren't any.

GR: WILL THE UNIT ACT AS A STORAGE MEDIUM FOR THE N64 AS WELL AS A GAME-PLAYING DEVICE? WHAT ARE ALL OF ITS USES?

HT: The basis of the DD is a storage medium. Its capacity for saving data is very large compared to other home consoles. Additional game data can be stored on the DD, and besides storage, the combination of storage and the network connection opens up possibilities. For example, there is the Digital Derby Magazine service. Using this service, you can download a particular week's race information and simulate the race with different weather, as if those real-life races were part of a simulated racing game. Although many baseball games come out every year, their fundamental operation hardly changes, right? Even so, people who follow baseball buy the new version faithfully, every year. If we can simply offer the new season's player data, at a lower price than an entirely new game, it'll be a boon for those people.

GR: IS IT POSSIBLE TO SELECT A DIFFERENT INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER LIKE YOU CAN WITH THE DREAMCAST? IT'S SOMETHING OF A WEAKNESS THAT YOU CAN ONLY ACCESS RANDNET IN THE TOKYO AREA SO FAR.

HT: Tokyo is the only access point for now. You are only able to access this network by way of the DD, and you cannot select a service provider other than Randnet. I don't necessarily want people to be able to access this network via PCs. Our first principle is to create a members-only community of DD users, a place where users of the Mario Artists series are able to show their own work and also be able to see the work of others on display. What I mean is that I want members of this community to feel lucky when using this service.

GR: HOW DOES THE F-ZERO X EXPANSION KIT IMPROVE ON THE ORIGINAL F-ZERO X?

HT: One is the addition of new racers, of course. Another attractive characteristic is the construction of racers and courses. This is an extremely powerful tool; you'll be able to build new game elements using exactly the same tools employed by the F-Zero development staff. I think it would be great if we could hold an original course design contest contest on the net, and put up the winner's course for download. There could even be a racing contest based on that course. Incidentally, don't forget that you need the original F-Zero X cart to use the F-Zero X Expansion Kit.

GR: WILL THE 64DD BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE DOLPHIN? CAN THE 64DD BE USED AS A STORAGE DEVICE FOR THE DOLPHIN?

HT: Since the concepts of the Dolphin and DD are totally different, we believe that the Dolphin won't be compatible.

GR: IS RANDNETDD GOING TO MAINTAIN ITS BUSINESS TIES WITH NINTENDO AFTER THE RELEASE OF THE DOLPHIN?

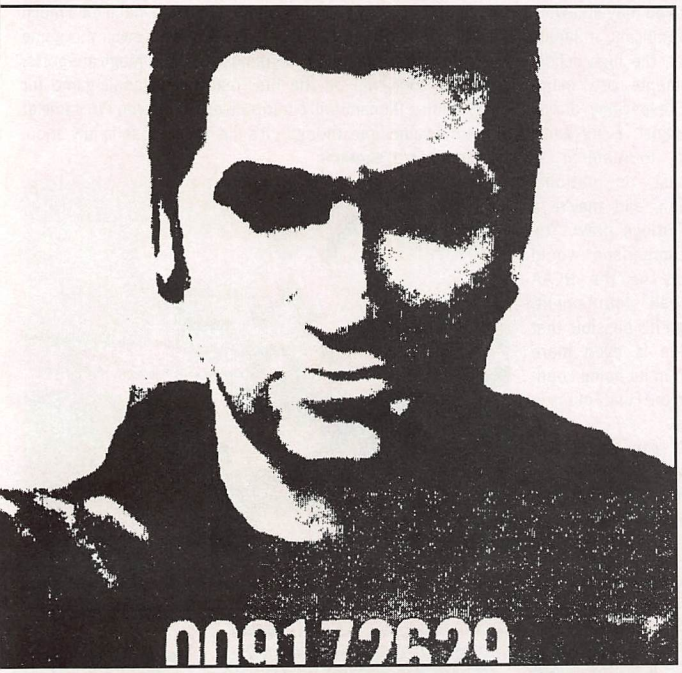
HT: Of course we will. Nintendo is one of the primary investors, after all [laugh]. **GR**

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REFLECTIONS INTERACTIVE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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World Republic Preview • developer/publisher mahou • available in japan july

Koushien 2000

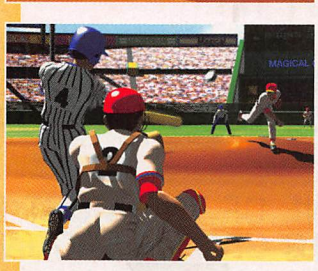
PS2

Burning high-school baseball action! Is Honjakuniku High included, perchance?

Just looking at the title, I suppose you can't imagine what sort of sports game this is. Koushien is the home stadium of a Japanese professional baseball team, the Hanshin Tigers. Then, is Koushien 2000 a baseball game focusing on the Tigers? No! While it hosts the Tigers during the pro season, Koushien is even more famous as the site of Japan's high school baseball championships, held every spring and summer.

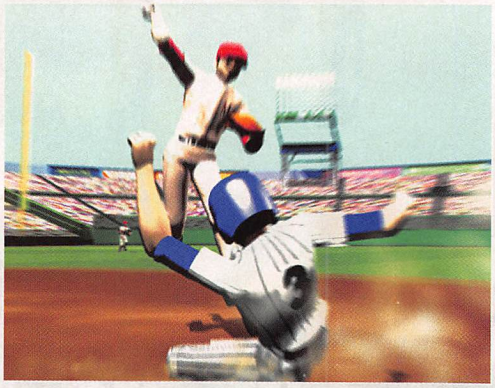
Now you know what sport it's about, but you may still wonder why a high school game would be so significant. In Japan, however, the high school tournaments are major events, especially during the summer. Every game of the tournament is broadcast on national television, and they're a major ratings draw. The best comparison would probably be the NCAA basketball tournament, although it's possible that Koushien is even more popular in its home country than the Final Four is in America.





Don't say you're not interested just because this isn't a professional baseball game. It's still on the Playstation 2, and the players and stadium graphics have a level of realism that you won't see on an existing system. There are more than 4000 high school teams to choose from, and in your hands, any one could go on to become a national champion. In addition, although many sports games are becoming more and more complex these days, Koushien favors a much simpler interface, built around a single button (the circle button). That may sound a bit simplistic, but when you think about it, it could make for a much friendlier multiplayer game; the one guy who owns the game won't be able to dominate his friends so easily. Magical Sports: Koushien 2000 will be the first realistic baseball game for PlayStation 2 (Konami will contribute an SD Jikkyou Pro game at about the same time, though); it's due to hit Japan in July 2000.

-D. SMITH/J. SAKAI



World Republic Preview • developer/publisher mahou • available in japan ps: march/ps2: october

Killer bass 2

PlayStation PS2

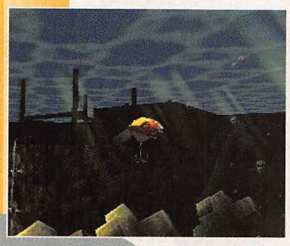
Stalk the wily largemouth in lakes of pristine realism.

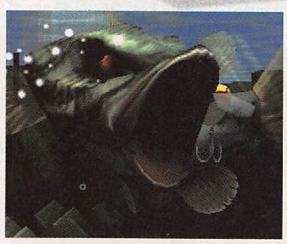


Have a look at the PS graphics for Killer Bass below; now have a look at what the PS2 has in store. Let's hope that bass isn't armed.

The second PlayStation 2 title from Mahou is that ever-popular mainstay, a bass fishing game called Killer Bass 2. You may not yet be familiar with Killer Bass for PlayStation; that's probably because Killer Bass hasn't been released yet. The Killer Bass games differ on certain major points from other bass fishing games. For one, they occasionally eschew the realistic stage design of most of their brethren for lakes with peculiar elements such as skeletons at the bottom (be careful you don't snag), or shrines floating on the water. Also, they include an original, slightly more complex way to control your line and lure. After casting, you enter a button combination (like a special move from a fighting game) to direct your lure, and use similar commands to reel in a hooked bass. Whether it's an effective simulation of real fishing is up in the air, perhaps, but unlike some other fishing games, it should play pretty easily without an expensive special controller. Also, I guess KB2 will definitely have a graphical edge over its competition (and its predecessor). The PS2's Graphics Synthesizer should be able to render very realistic real-time water effects, and the Emotion Engine could drive some very smart fish. Killer Bass for PS and Killer Bass 2 for PS2 are due out in Japan during March and October, respectively, of 2000.

-D. SMITH/J. SAKAI







koushien 2000 © mahou 2000. killer bass 2 © mahou 2000.

World Republic Preview • developer/publisher **mahou** • available in japan **august**

go go golf

PS2

A simple golf game with a few twists for new ease of play.

The last PlayStation 2 title from Mahou ("Magic") is a golf game. Again, the characters are realistic, not deformed, although they do still sport a cartoonish look; it's rather like Hot Shots Golf 2, the American version of Minna no Golf 2. Although the course graphics are also a bit on the iconic side, they are very bright and beautiful. Round mode (for 1 to 4 players) and Practice mode are common features of golf games the market over, but Tour Mode is a bit more remarkable. In this mode, you choose one trainee from a set of three, and take off on a journey to become an ace pro golfer. You'll take lessons, undergo examinations, and finally compete in major tournaments like the All British Open; it's like Success Mode in Konami's Jikkyou Pro, or the simulation mode in Gran Turismo.

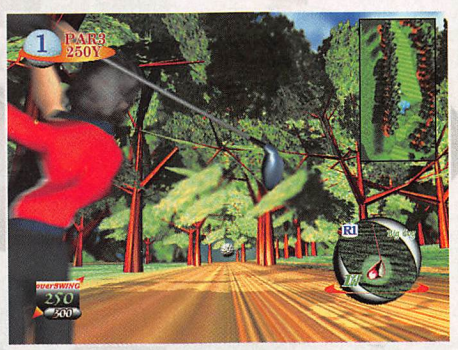
Like Koushien 2000, Go Go Golf is built around a simple, one-button control system. You choose your club, aim your shot, and after you decide on a point where you want to land your ball, a shadow image appears around your character. This shadow represents the best backswing and arc to hit the point you're aiming at. Your character starts the back swing once you push the circle button, and once your character and his shadow match, another press of the circle will send your ball sailing down the fairway. That's all there is to it. Go Go Golf, which should serve the PS2 with easy-playing golf in fine style, will be released in August 2000.

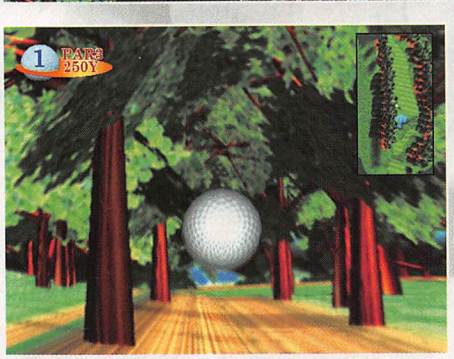
-D. SMITH/J. SAKAI

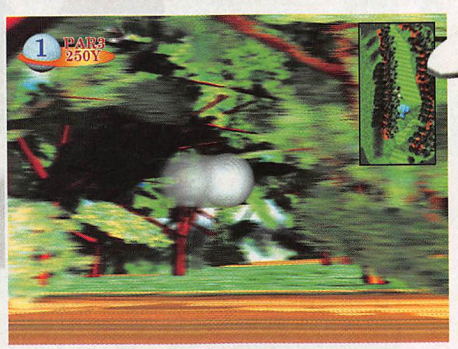




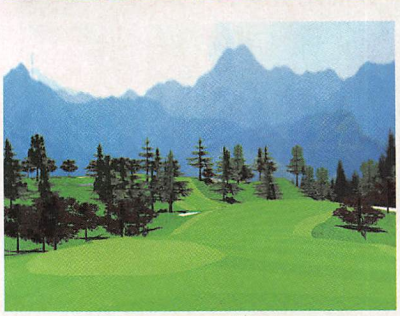


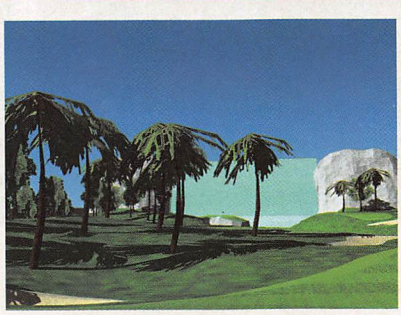


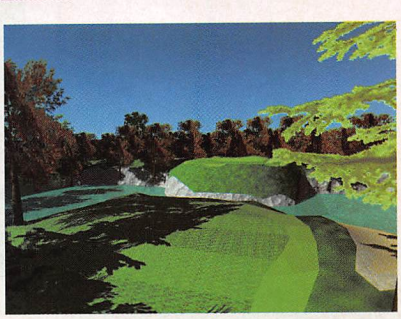




Above left: Go Go Golf's swinging presentation is decidedly different from the golf games that precede it—and look at the camera follow the ball! If the motion looks that good on the page, start imagining the movement in real time! Above: the character models may not be as cartoony as other offerings, but it's entering that territory. Below: some of the holes you'll face, PS2-style!







go go golf © mahou 2000.

電気製品

World Republic Review • developer/publisher from software • available in japan spring

evergrace

PS2

The PS2 upgrade will make for a much more innovative game. Consult your runs of *Vogue*.

Evergrace was halfway to completion for release on the PlayStation, planned to be the last PS title released by From Software. However, expecting bigger things from the title now, From's PlayStation development has completely ceased, and the the game is set for release on the PlayStation 2.

As one might think, taking a game already developed for the PS and porting it to the PS2 takes a good deal of effort. Through that effort, though, the game is destined to be much greater than it might have been. The expected graphical enhancements will be implemented, but improvements in the scenarios and gameplay system will also be achieved.

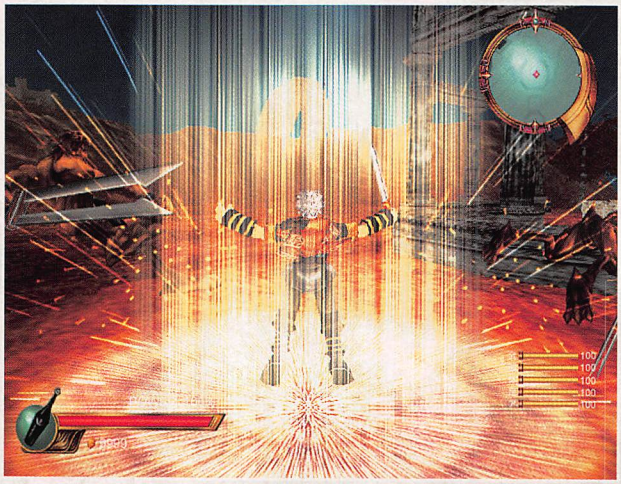
In the PS2 version, two main characters, Shalami and Yuterald, are available, as opposed to only one male character in the original version. According to From, "It was almost impossible to realistically display the female figure on the PS, due to the limited number of polygons that can be drawn, but the power of the PS2 made it possible for us to create a female character, as we had originally hoped."



Yuterald and Shalami are suddenly transported into the realm of an ancient empire, thought to have collapsed long ago. They're told how and why they were brought there, but before they can return to their home, they must piece together the secret of the mysterious Crest, and they can't complete the quest alone; both characters have to work together to complete the scenarios and discover the final adversary. Also, for a more lifelike correlation between visuals and gameplay, your characters have little to no defense against damage. "When you wind up in a pinch, you have to improvise how you complete the puzzle and escape," says From.

In what is definitely an original twist, fashion is an important gameplay element. Depending on how you configure your characters' equipment, including the clothes they wear, a critic judges your fashion sense. If you're savvy enough to develop a coordinated, original look, you can acquire other necessary equipment at a lower cost and fix your existing equipment at a discount (one subsequently wonders how the game will react to cross-dressing, stripes with plaids, or other stylistic offenses). Of course, all the equipment your character is wearing and carrying will be rendered in detail out of real-time polygons.

As you can see, the early screenshots from the game are beautiful, but as is becoming something of a mantra regarding PS2 titles, From promises that the final version will be far superior. -D SMITH/J. SAKAI











evergrace © from software 2000.

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chrono cross



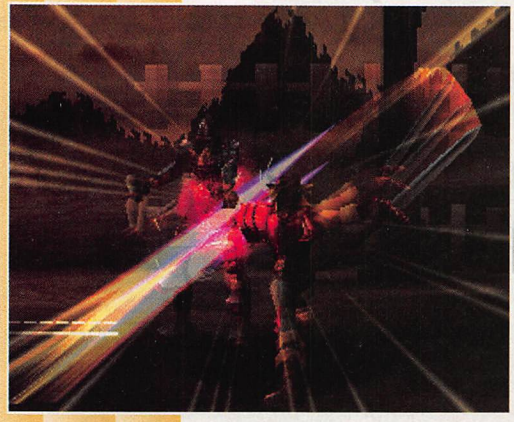




Just when you thought you were catching up, here come two more RPGs you just gotta play...

No sooner than I'd sworn off turn-based RPGs forever—especially ones I cannot read—along come two of the godliest I have ever laid my hands on. And while I'll complete neither in Japanese, I will wait diligently until the day they arrive Stateside and then savor every ounce of each... Then I'm finished... I think.

Okay, those of you who've known me since the days I was crazy enough to conquer the likes of Fhey Area, Aisle Lord and Funky Horror Band (now that's an embarrassing one) are probably thinking, "What the? Swearing off RPGs? Has he gone mad?" I'm not through with role-playing, I'm just ready for its next incarnation. It's the walk-fight-walk-fight-walk-fight scenario that's got me down. You know the drill: first comes the fade, then the characters appear on the plain, next the camera spin, then the battle, then the battle-over interface and then...a few more inches. Without the loading in and out I might be okay, but for some reason I'm looking for something new after all these years. Perhaps the elimination of the loading will suffice. What I'd really like to see are enemies coming from far away or sporadically sprinkled about a 3D map. Approaching them you'd draw weapons and have it out without a break—turn based or real time. Then, when they fall you'd pillage their supplies, heist their weapons (if you need to) and move along. I mean bend down, grab theirs and toss yours in the weeds—that sort of thing. Maybe even get some blood on your armor. I like to see my enemies and choose my battles is what I'm getting at, and both of these games supply that, which is part of why I see both as possibly the best ever for the PlayStation. Both fuse real-time polygonal characters with beautiful pre-rendered backgrounds, each has an inspired fighting system, and both feature some of the best character design and interaction and music I have ever seen or heard. Which is why I've combined them for this preview. These two games are both events and will become forever part of the greatest role-playing legacy in the history of gaming, as the Sony PlayStation fades into the archives. We'll update you on both as their U.S. release dates draw near. - D. HALVERSON











World Republic Preview • developer scei • publisher scei • available in japan now

legend of dragoon

chrono cross © square 2000. legend of dragoon © sony 2000.

World Republic Preview • developer sting • publisher esp • available in japan now

evolution 2

Mag Launcher and friends return in this nicely enhanced and expanded Evolution sequel from Sting.

I really liked the original Evolution, and Sting's charming random dungeon RPG is at press time sitting at number three on the top ten U.S. sales charts, a fact that bodes well for a domestic release of this wonderful sequel, recently released in Japan.

Evolution 2 stars the same cast of cute and appealing characters, along with newcomers like Carcano and the mysterious Yuruka, but it's in the way that the game's world has been somewhat opened up that makes this an interesting sequel. The town is much larger, and the dungeons have undergone several changes. Not only are the randomly generated dungeons much more interesting to look at, but new fixed layout areas have been implemented, bringing welcome structure to the environment. Gameplay remains largely unchanged, which is fine by me, although it has not gone untouched. It's easier now to come up behind enemies for a tactictal advantage, a favorite strategy from the first game, and a new behind-the-back, third person perspective has been added, making the dungeon exploration feel quite different.





Ubi Soft, the U.S. publishers of the first Evolution, would be wise to consider bringing out this sequel. It's a bigger and better game, and the Dreamcast is still deficient in the RPG category. Seems like a no-

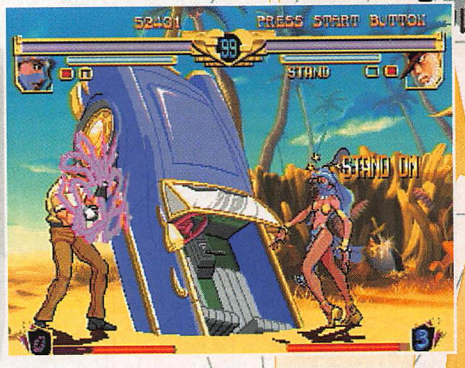
World Republic Review • developer capcom • publisher capcom • available in japan now

jojo's bizarre adventure

Not the most technical of fighters, but packed with off-the-wall anime-inspired action.

The best kind of genius is deranged genius, and as far as its visual presentation, Jojo's Bizarre Adventure overflows with frothing insanity. Arriving from the comic and A.P.P.P. anime, the cast includes (among others) a Chihuahua, a giant bird, and a charming young lady who sends the front ends of what look like late-fifties Cadillacs shooting out of the ground to thwack her opponents. Ah. Groove On Fight finally has competition in the weirdness department.





The gameplay that accompanies this lunacy is reasonably solid, borrowing basic elements from X-Men: COTA and adding the interesting STAND system, which lets you swap between ordinary and upgraded versions of your character through the summoning of assistants or strange doppelgangers. If you object to Street Fighter III's slightly staid presentation, here's a welcome alternative. **-D. Smith**

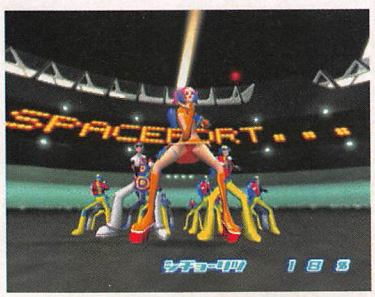
World Republic says, "I feel nothing but love for the bizarre cast of Jojo's, and this is the best available port." **B-**

World Republic Preview • developer soft 9 • publisher sega • available in japan now

space channel 5

Ulala is by far the most seductive enchantress to come out of the gaming scene.

What's with all these games where you control a latex-laden diva who shoots aliens with a space pistol and thereby claims people to dance in her entourage? Can't anyone think of anything new for once? Okay, so this game is more than slightly original, though it is disappointing that there were, in fact, no Space Channels 1 through 4. You are Ulala, a smoldering space siren, and it is your charge to push back the invading forces of the Moroadians, who are zapping people into dancing submission.



To the beats of completely enjoyable music, you essentially play a game of Simon, mimicking the aliens by using up, down, left, and right, plus two shoot buttons: one for blasting aliens, and one for recapturing humans, all of this occurring with CG backgrounds. It's a very similar experience to Parappa the Rapper, but what an experience. Along the way, you gain some hilarious characters, including helmeted photographers, an electric guitarist, and a surprise guest from Sega's past.



The only real things to complain about are the imprecision of the button-pressing, and the unbelievable brevity of the game, so here's hoping that will get fixed when it hits the U.S. **-J.R. Haugen**

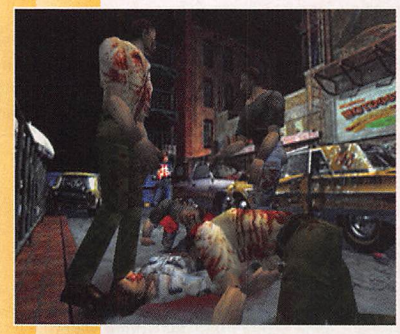
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World Republic Review • developer/publisher capcom • available in japan now

biohazard 2

Biohazard 2 goes to hi-res and higher ground on DC.



Capcom keeps the Resident Evil assembly line going with Biohazard 2: Value Plus. Essentially the remarkable PlayStation version of Resident Evil 2, this game finds new life with a hi-res makeover. While the gameplay may have stayed the same, the prerendered settings look quite a bit better, and for a Resident Evil fanatic like myself, the cleaner, more vibrant presentation is compelling reason to revisit this classic. For those of you who care about little bonuses, the Arranged game has been added—it's much easier—as well as a few empty extras like an art gallery and battle mode. Anyone who missed out on Biohazard 2 owes it to himself to add this game to his collection. As for the rest...well, is a prettier version of RE2 worth your time? **-B. Fiechter**

World Republic says. "Despite playing the PS Biohazard 2 more times than I can count, I still couldn't put this one down." **A-**

World Republic Review • developer: arika publisher: capcom • available in japan now

street fighter ex2

The stalwart Street Fighter formula gets maimed by a 3D presentation.



I'll be the first to admit that the Street Fighter series is due for dramatic change, but as Street Fighter III has proved on Dreamcast, old ideas can be brought to vivid life with amazing animations and superb 2D artwork. Capcom always seems to find a way to pump new blood into the tired veins of this perennial fighting game series, but with Street Fighter EX 2, the heart has been mangled on the 3D operating table.



EX 2 recycles moves, technique and characters from Street Fighter games of past, only now a gorgeous presentation is not available to augment the combat. While visually a step ahead of EX, when compared to the better 3D brawlers today, EX 2 looks deflated, and even the combat itself struggles to induce excitement. Credit this to the limited character movement and the game's lack of responsiveness and fluidity.

To me, it makes no sense to strip all the qualities that make the Street Fighter series so strong and dilute them by a constrictive polygonal presentation. It's up to the PlayStation 2 to take the EX series to higher ground. **-B. Fiechter**

World Republic says. "Believe it or not, the original EX was actually more fun to play." **C+**

WORLD FXP .4884.435 156487 357.753

Dreamcast Review

GODZILLA GENERATIONS MAXIMUM IMPACT

GAME BY GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT/SEGA

The Godzilla game we've been waiting for isn't quite here yet. Maximum Impact got our hopes up at TGS, but the real thing is much like the first Generations – great monsters, boring levels, and gameplay like Panzer Dragoon on a bowlful of reds. There's no excuse for such slow railed progression on the DC, and no reason for you to pick this up. **-D. Smith**



World Republic Preview • developer/publisher squaresoft • available in japan now

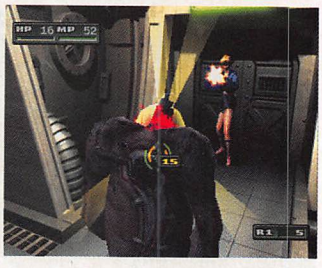
parasite eve 2

Aya returns to solve what it is exactly that haunts her.

After a very disappointing opening credits sequence, I slowly began to realize that Square took a completely different approach in creating the same atmosphere found in the original. The game starts you off inside a police station shooting range and it is here where you will get the chance to fine tune your proficiency in shooting, reloading and avoiding enemy attack. It is not necessary to do so, but it does reap rewards if done with skill. Soon a message comes from downtown where S.W.A.T. members have already tried to control the situation. This is where all hell breaks loose and the game really shows off some great use of camera direction, and the story builds.



Most of the puzzles are fairly standard during the first hour or so—find the key, turn the lock-type situations, although small sub-plots keep the pace and lack of brainwork moving nicely. The new monsters are creepy and downright disturbing, though their AI is pretty weak. During day two the objectives and action are bumped way up. Here you will need to solve multiple riddles and fight a collection of new mutant creatures. In fact, a lot of story development happens during this day.



Battles have changed. Now you can completely unload on an enemy, stopping only to avoid attack, and your Parasite Energies are all obtainable from the getgo. It is up to you to distribute your experience points where you see fit.

At the time of this writing, I got about halfway through the second and last disk. I could give a grade for gameplay alone, but not understanding the story makes me apprehensive to do so. The CG movies are amazing, the music is fitting and gameplay is compelling. I'm excited to see the localization. **-T. Stratton**

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電気製品

World Republic Preview • developer/publisher **kid** • available in japan **feb**

treasure strike

Ill-gotten booty's the name of the game in this new multiplayer Dreamcast title from Kid.

You should be pleased to know that the fun multiplayer action/adventure Treasure Strike is set to be released on February 17 for DC in Japan. In this game, you become a treasure hunter adventuring the world over, competing with rivals to find a legendary treasure and become the number one treasure hunter in the world.

There are three modes of play in the game: story, offline battle, and online battle. In story mode, which features 22 stages, your mission is to find buried treasure, getting rich by selling it to dealers. Depending on your treasure-finding skills, the chief of your village may grant you permission to go further into an unexplored area. Each stage in story mode takes about 15 to 30 minutes, so even inexperienced players can easily get comfortable with the game and have fun. In either online or offline battle modes, you can get on the Internet to test your hunting skills. In addition, when you play over the net, you can obtain rare treasure items that are not included in the main game.

And net play is what this game is all about. The goal is to get the target treasure in the treasure box and bring it back to your place. The treasure box is of course locked, so you need the key to open it, and the key is randomly distributed among the players. In order to get the key, you have to steal or snatch it from other players by whatever means necessary. After successfully opening the treasure box, not only can you find the target but also numerous items such as jewelry and weapons, called Arms.

I greatly enjoyed the beta version, and I expect the final version to be even more fun. We'll be bring you a review soon, along with word on a possible domestic release. **-M. Hobbs/J. Sakai**





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Dreamcast Review

VALKYRIE PROFILE

GAME BY TRI-ACE/ENIX

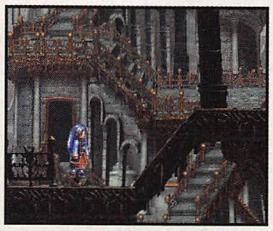
Watching the first cinematic sequence in Valkyrie Profile, you might come upon a surprise, if you don't know enough Japanese to follow things. This interlude concerns Aryuze, a soldier betrayed by his leaders. Accused of treason, he chooses the only path left: he draws a knife and stabs himself. He slumps to the floor, dead. He'll be the bastion of your party throughout the game.

Profile, by Star Ocean developers tri-Ace, contains an originality of design and story construction that place it a leap ahead of that uninspired effort. The lead is a Valkyrie, a gatherer of the slain; if you remember your Norse myth, they collect the souls of warriors to fight in the armies of the gods. Thus, your party of characters is composed of the resurrected dead.

The game alternates between cutscenes, where new souls are introduced, and 2D side-scrolling dungeon sequences. The dungeons play like Metroid or Castlevania with an RPG battle system; some basic platforming elements keep the game varied. The battle system, meanwhile, has a quick, action-emphasized feel. Your characters attack in real time during your turn sequence. Timing maneuvers properly can increase your damage, break through the enemy's defenses, or set off thunderous 3D special attacks.

It's an interesting gameplay package, using traditional elements in an unfamiliar combination, and it's wrapped in great visual presentation. The world is painted in pale, muted colors; combined with animated accents and parallax scroll, the effect is of understated, absorbing beauty. Valkyrie also has some of the best sprite animation I've seen in a PlayStation RPG. The characters are colorful, smooth, and look much sharper than those in Grandia or Xenogears (but perhaps that's because tri-Ace is wise enough to avoid extreme close-ups).

Enix of America's recent reboot should mean a localization; I'm hoping for it, anyway. In an age of great leaps in technology, there's still plenty of room for classic style. **-D. Smith** B



World Republic Preview • developer/publisher **sammy/sting** • available in japan **now**

viewpoint 2064

The sequel to a cult classic prepares to anger a new generation of gamers on the N64.

One day, your memory took leave of you, and the world went dark. Waking up, you found yourself becoming not vermin, but an advanced fighter aircraft. Guided by an unknown living organism, you enter planet T3 to find the secret stone that will allow you to retrieve your lost memory. However, your way is blocked by the legion of mechanical bugs known as Seal Insect.

This nightmarish story is the basis of Viewpoint 2064, but for all of its background's complexity, your mission is simple: shoot the hell out everything and dash for the the secret stone.

Viewpoint is one of the few third-person 3D shooters available for the N64. Although its environment is 3D, you're limited as far as the axes you can move on; there are only two (up/down, right/left), which may make the game frustrating for some, as it lacks realistic aircraft movement. Unlike Star Fox, you cannot move back and forth on the Z-axis.

In the game's favor, those who tend to get sick easily playing 3D games (like me) don't have to worry about becoming ill, and the 2D movement brings back a simpler set of maneuvers from earlier games. The action of dodging shots and drawing a bead with your weapons is much more immediate.

So far, the game's graphics are great, especially the large boss characters, and the story is another selling point; it has multiple endings, which should make up for the, shall we say, mildly disappointing conclusion to the original Viewpoint. The demo versions have improved since I first played it at Space World '99, so it will be interesting to see how the gameplay finally turns out. **-D. Smith/ J. Sakai**









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olor. 87 Minutes.
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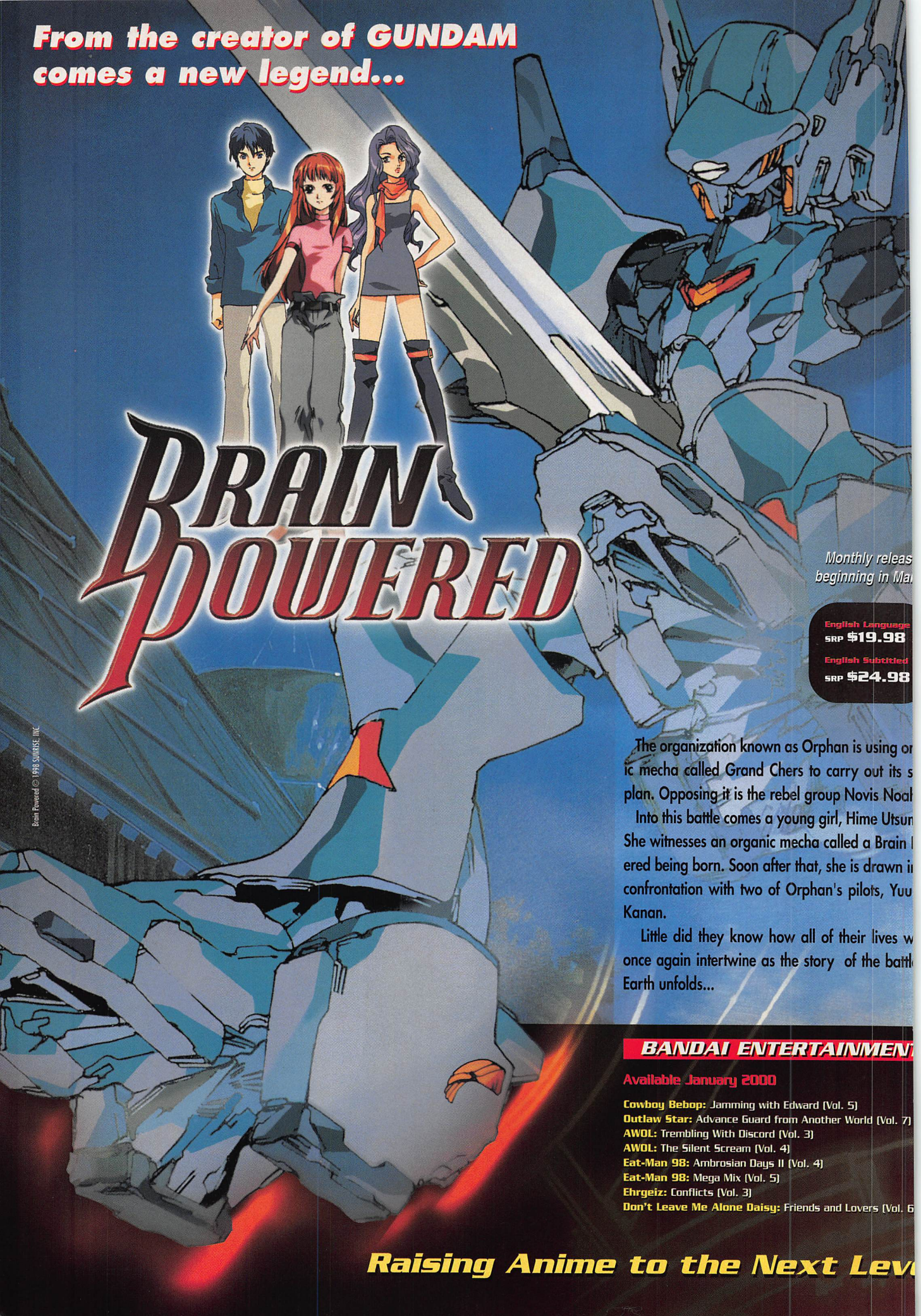
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once again intertwine as the story of the battl
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SERIAL EXPERIMENTS LAIN 3,4

REVIEWED BY DAVE SMITH

•1998 TRIANGLE STAFF/PIONEER LDC

90 MINUTES•DUAL LANGUAGE

★★★★1/2 ACTION/DRAMA

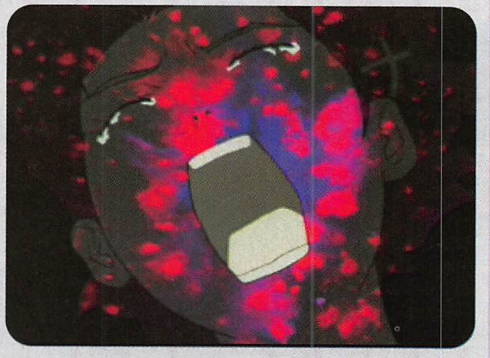
I just watched the latter half of *Serial Experiments Lain* in one sitting. I recommend the experience. It's rather like the good bits of *Evangelion*, without all the death and horrible maims mixed in. You do need to get a bit of fresh air after it's over.

The ideas this show has! The next human evolutionary leap, mixed up with the advance of computer networks, Schumann radiation, the origins of consciousness in the breakdown of the bicameral mind, and, of all things, the Tophet Document, all revolving around one young girl, plagued with a very immediate need to know "who is there, beyond me, here?" And that's only the most immediate of the many questions that beset her.

I beg your pardon for my excessive imprecision. *Lain* does that to you. Partly it's because it would be criminal to reveal too many of her secrets, but also because much is left unsaid and unrevealed as the show draws to a conclusion. That doesn't really matter, though. What needs to be said, is said, and more exposition would ruin the mood, which is the best part as always. You don't watch *Lain* so much as you're enveloped by it. It progresses in a terribly postmodern fashion, skipping in and out of real and false worlds, freely changing the rules and conditions of both. It doesn't register as confusing, though, or even particularly unusual; it does an excellent job of impressing you with its own peculiar version of logic, and in any case, the characters are so engaging, and their distresses so clear and immediate, that your attention is held through any number of twists and turns.

The animation style, which really isn't quite like anything else that precedes it, suits the shifting reality of the show perfectly. I only recently learned that there is no actual hand-painted cel animation in *Lain*; the entire show was generated in a computer. This bodes well for what seems to be the inevitable conversion of the animation industry to digital production; 2D and 3D elements alike are smoothly drawn and manipulated, and it never loses the look of proper cel animation unless it wants to.

The DVD release of *Serial Experiments Lain* ought to be on the top of any fan's Christmas shopping list, or indeed that of anyone who wants something intelligent and complex to watch. With its sharp, original look and introspective character, it's an unbelievably welcome change from the junk that still seems to clog the American anime market. **GR**



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ORIGINAL DIRTY PAIR VOL.5

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER

•1998 ADV FILMS (USA) • 1998 (JP)

50 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH

★★★★ ACTION/DRAMA



Story: In the first episode, the lovely angels are summoned to help a world that has been embroiled in civil war for 30 years. After extensive peace talks between the government and the rebels, a third party has sent in five super soldiers to disrupt the talks and keep the war going. Kay and Yuri need to find out who would want to keep a civil war from coming to an end.

In the second episode there are tensions between independent space truckers and a large shipping corporation. Someone has also been killing or kidnapping independent space truckers so that they are too scared to run their normal routes. Kay and Yuri must disguise themselves as truckers to lure the killers out into the open.

These are pretty standard plot lines for Dirty Pair, but there's enough action and mystery to keep you interested.

Animation: Extremely old school. It's TV quality and not impressive by any stretch of the imagination, but, considering the age of this anime, all is forgiven. And the old animation does not ruin the appeal of *Original Dirty Pair* one bit.

Character Design: Also very old school. Think *Project A-ko* or *Black Magic M-66*. The dirty pair themselves look as if a lot of thought went into their design, but all the other characters seem to fall into that generic biped category.

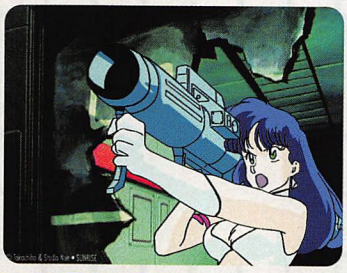
Soundtrack: Somewhere between '80s pop and rock. A tip for some guaranteed laughs: Turn off the sound and watch the opening credits of this anime with the old live action Wonder Woman TV opening theme playing.

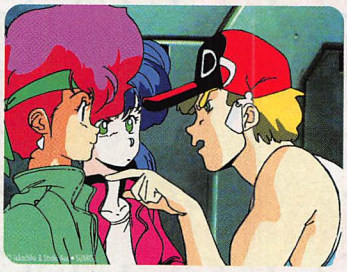
Fight Scenes: It's all fun and games until someone loses an eye. It's bloodless violence, but it can be pretty brutal in some spots. People die regularly in this anime. In fact, you're lucky if several minutes go buy and someone hasn't been shot execution style, blown up or incinerated. I found myself smiling for no reason during the fight scenes. Maybe it was all the heavy artillery.

Voices: Quite good actually. Even the generic one-episode-only characters sounded believable. I liked how they gave the truckers a southern twang.

Final Analysis: It doesn't look very dazzling from the get go, but this series starts to grow on you. I want my own personal bazooka. **GR**







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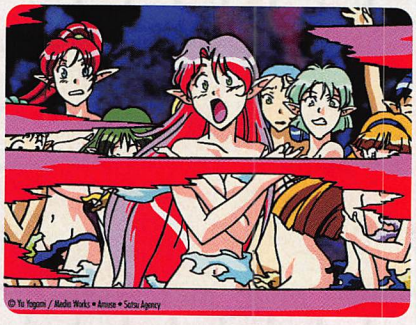
THOSE WHO HUNT ELVES VOL.5

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER

•1998 ADV FILMS (USA) • 1998 (JP)

50 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH

★★★1/2 ACTION/DRAMA



Story: In the first episode, Airi takes a special interest in a young elf girl who is trying to impress a prince. Airi takes her under her wing and teaches her how to dance and act proper. Unfortunately, her good deed is almost ruined by the other's mad quest to find and strip elves.

In the second episode, the team runs across an elf girl and her grandfather who beg to have her stripped. Too good to be true. Unfortunately, she's wearing enchanted armor that won't come off with anything short of a nuclear blast.

The script has been adjusted to make the jokes relevant to American culture, so there are a lot of references to artifacts like Britney Spears and the Backstreet Boys. For some, this might make it more understandable, but it'll probably annoy others; the latter will probably be watching the sub version anyway.





Character Design: There's the sporty pony-tailed girl with an attitude, the short-haired cultured girl, the tall, narcissistic, Ryu-from-Street-Fighter look-alike, and their super deformed animal pal. Standard character designs.

Animation: TV quality. The plots never require the animation to really dazzle you. Since this is a comedy, it could get away with less than splendid animation, but there were a couple of really blatant cheats by the animators.

Voices: Hilarious! There was a surprisingly low annoyance factor—the girls sounded more Beverly Hills High than Alicia Silverstone herself. This is another factor that may make it funnier, or may make you hate it.

Highlight: Two, actually: Junpei yelling, "Come on, you pointy-eared freaks! Bring it on!" And when Grandpa tries to get naked.

Final Analysis: The plots are tremendously lame, but they were also squirt-milk-out-your-nose funny. I had the most fun listening to the main characters insult each other. I was laughing within the first 30 seconds. If you want a good stupid laugh, then this is your show! **GR**

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CITY HUNTER: MILLION DOLLAR CONSPIRACY

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•1998 ADV FILMS (USA) • 1998 (JP)
50 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH
★★★ ACTION/DRAMA



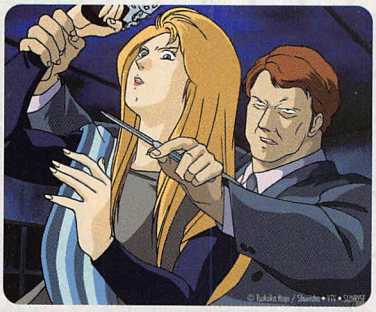
Story: Joe and Kaori are hired for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to guard a beautiful woman for an obscene amount of cash. The amount is so much that Kaori even agrees to look the other way when Joe attempts to get some nookie from their pretty client. The woman that they are guarding claims to be on the run from a mafia family in Los Angeles, but her story is a little too suspicious for Joe and Kaori. The lady is a bit too good with a gun and Falcon tells Kaori that there's someone from L.A. that is there to kill Joe. Joe quickly confronts their client to get the real story. Joe also now has to deal with a maniac who is obsessed with assassinating important people with toy planes and tanks. The plot has some nice twists and it keeps you guessing right up until the end. But sadly, Joe getting hit over the head with a mallet is still the best part of this anime.

Character Design: Plain and very '80s. Not at all flamboyant and there is questionable choice of attire for all the characters. The overall design of the series shows a passion for realism that is rarely seen in anime...except for that whole 100-ton mallet thing.

Animation: Action scenes are where *City Hunter* really excels as far as animation is concerned. Other than that, most of the animation is mediocre; one can get pretty bored while waiting for some good comedy or action. Luckily, it's not a very long wait to see either.

Voices: Marginal at best, but some are positively criminal. I think we've executed people here in the states for lesser offenses.

Soundtrack: There's this awful '80s track near the climax of the movie. I was getting this mental picture of Sylvester Stallone in boxing shorts. Yuck! The rest of the music is a mixed bag that reminded me exactly why we all ran screaming from the '80s.





Highlight: When Joe puts Emily's bra on his head.

Fight Scenes: Joe may be a flaming pervert, but only a fool would get into a fight or a shootout with him.

Final Analysis: I hope you like cheese with your anime. GR

X

PREVIEWED BY DAVE SMITH
•1998 ADV FILMS (USA) • 1998 (JP)
50 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH
PREVIEW ACTION/DRAMA







X is violent, incomprehensible, gorgeous shoujo insanity, an *Akira* for an age when fandom has developed more off-beat tastes, but still has no objection to beautiful nonsense. Manga has chosen wisely in preparing it for American release; this is anime that begs to be seen via the highest-quality media and display equipment possible.

On the eve of the apocalypse, the Dragons of Heaven and the Dragons of Earth battle for the future of the world. Before the millennium dawns, one side or the other will triumph, and the old world will be preserved or swept away. The fulcrum upon which the war balances is Kamui, the one Dragon not fated to join either side. He can choose his own destiny, and thus the side he joins will ultimately achieve victory.

Of course, as a dear friend once said, the plot of *X* really boils down to "16 people get ganked in 100 minutes." Like so many shows before it (especially Kadokawa Shoten productions, for whatever reason; CYBER-PSYCHIC...never mind), it suffers from a touch of Manga Adaptation Syndrome, a condition evidenced by the presence of characters and



plots that need just a bit more introduction for audiences to make heads or tails of them. That matters not, however, for this is king-hell Madhouse theatrical animation with CLAMP character design and a Shimizu Yasuaki soundtrack that does a perfect job of complementing the plot's effort to drive the viewer into a wrist-slitting state of depression. This is Quality Entertainment. We approve of this. We also humbly request that the X^2 trailer be included in the omake section of the required DVD release, so that the mad beauteous horror of *X* Japan's cataclysmic theme song may echo throughout the halls. Ah. GR



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Sailor Moon is back in her first movie! Sailor Moon and her Sailor Scouts must save Darien and the planet Earth from the evil Kisenian Blossom! The english language version features the voice talent and producers who worked on the Sailor Moon TV Series now playing on the Cartoon Network. The Uncut DVD contains unedited footage and more mature themes suited for an audience thirteen years of age or older, and will be in both English and the original Japanese languages.

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SPRIGGAN

PREVIEWED BY DAVE HALVERSON
•1998 ADV FILMS (USA) • 1998 (JP)
80 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH

PREVIEW *ACTION/DRAMA*

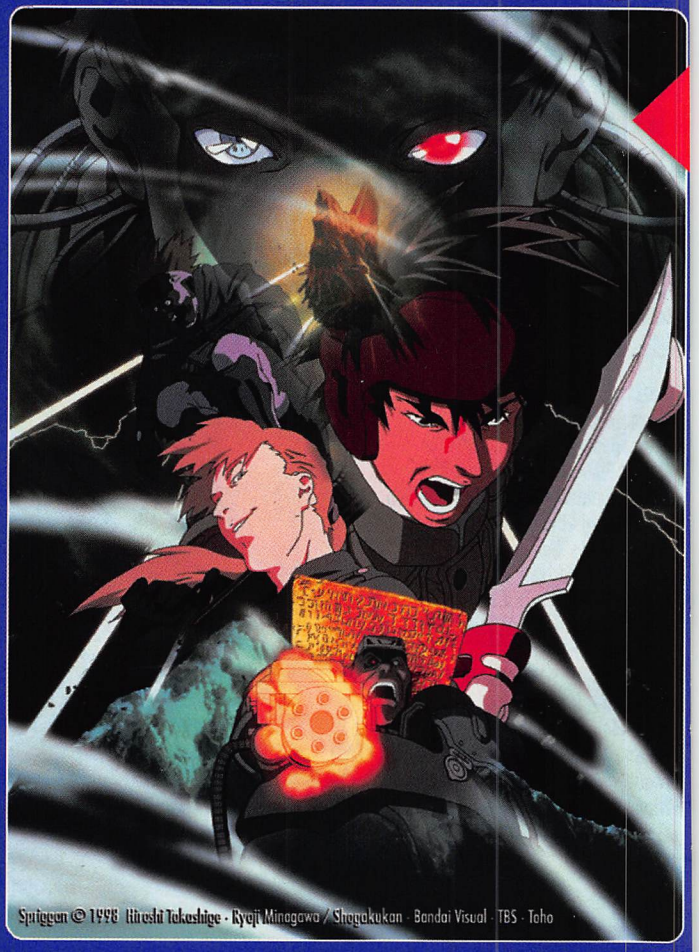


In a perfect world, Hurotsugi Kawasaki's *Spriggan* would win the Oscar for Best Picture, but then again, I suppose the fact that an animated feature of this magnitude merely exists, for those of us lucky enough to relish it, speaks highly enough of the human spirit. Although *Spriggan* isn't due in theatres until later this year, I was lucky enough to preview a subtitled VHS tape courtesy of the film's U.S. distributor ADV Films, and at the very least, I was in awe from the moment it began up to the last gripping, climactic act.

Without giving too much away, "Spriggan" is the name given operatives working inside the ARCAM organization, whose task it is to seal away and keep safe ancient ruins of the Earth and the secrets they may hold. In this case, the ruins in question harness Noah's Ark, and the Pentagon has its own ideas about who should have access to it. Now, if you're thinking about Noah's Ark in the traditional biblical sense, think again. What if it was the ark itself that caused the world to flood...or worse? Otomae Yu, ARCAM's top Spriggan, is compelled to walk right into the middle of this struggle, potentially the most catastrophic since the very creation of humankind. What ensues is 80 minutes of the most compelling and beautiful animation I have ever seen, accompanied by a superb soundtrack and inspired character design. This is the movie every producer and director in Hollywood would love to make but never could. It's what anime is all about. We'll update you on the cast and release information as *Spriggan* nears its U.S. debut. **GR**







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-Dave Halverson

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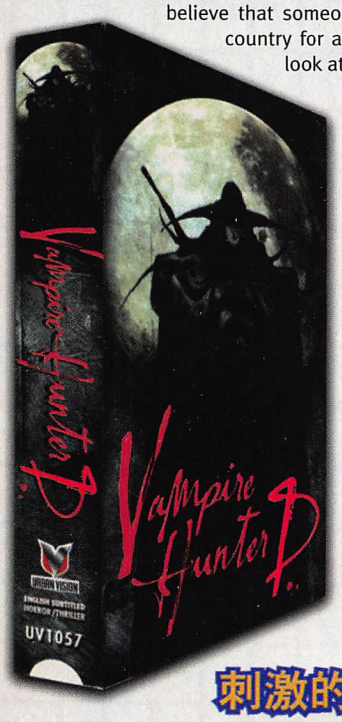
REVIEWED BY DAVE SMITH

•1999 URBAN VISION (USA) • 1985 STUDIO MADHOUSE(JP)

80 MINUTES•ENGLISH SUBTITLED

★★★ ACTION/DRAMA





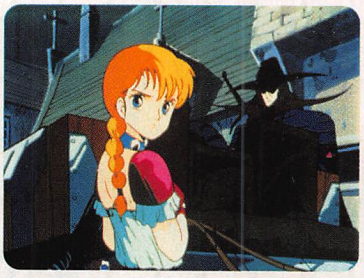
This is an interesting case as far as criticism and recommendation. In the decade and a half since its original production, *Vampire Hunter D* has definitely aged. The quality of the animation and the style of its design very clearly belong to an earlier time; the plot frequently does not make a lot of sense. I'm inclined to believe that someone who's followed anime in this country for a relatively short time is going to look at it a little cross-eyed. Objectively speaking, I guess that would indicate good taste on their part, actually.

But I have a hard time speaking objectively about this. I first saw this movie, heck, years and years ago, on that old Friday-night double bill TNT used to show, the *Streamline D* and *Heavy Metal* edited for television. *Heavy Metal* cut for a family audience, incidentally, is funnier than hell. For a while there, *D* was one of the only anime available in America; it belongs to the pre-Animeigo age of *Akira*, *Fist of the North Star*, and all the rest of that good stuff.

Vampire Hunter D is worth seeing simply as a lesson in the history of anime fandom. For the poor and unconnected, this used to be all there was, and hideously dubbed to boot (even the iffy sub translation here is a giant step up). It's also an interesting look at the wonderfully warped (bizarre, violent, dang strange...) early years of Studio Madhouse, now producing some of the best contemporary animation, like *X* and *Trigun*. The fact of the matter is, even though the animation ain't top of the line anymore, *D*'s design remains timeless. The characters, created by Yoshitaka Amano (before he worked on Final Fantasy), possess his refined fantastic invention; the world around them is equally weird, an SF postapocalypse with the paranoid Old World atmosphere that always seems to suffuse vampire movies.

The main attraction, of course, is D, perhaps the direct ancestor of Vash the Stampede, and certainly the soul of cool. Yes, after fifteen years, D is still cool. D's hat is still cool. D's sword is still way cool. D's hand still absolutely rules the freakin' Earth. Some things, as they say, never change.





刺激的な2-Dビジ

COWBOY BEBOP VOL.3

REVIEWED BY DAVE SMITH

•199X ANIMEVILLAGE.COM (USA) • SUNRISE/BANDAI VISUAL 199X (JP)

50 MINUTES•ENGLISH SUBTITLED

★★★★1/2 ACTION/DRAMA

Cowboy Bebop is a message from God. The first two volumes were merely epochal achievements—landmarks to be sure, but recognizably human in origin. They were naught, however, in comparison to episode 5, "Ballad of Fallen Angels." When this show is in its groove, it bears the legitimate touch of the divine. I dig it.

I've never seen anything that possessed this level of craftsmanship and this absolute surety of style. Maybe *Ghost in the Shell*, but even that seemed to wander pretty far off its track in the second act. Or *Shoujo Kakumei Utena*, but as much as I love that one, it bounces all over the map. *Space Pirate Captain Harlock* I guess would be a good comparison, but *Bebop* is nothing like it in any specific sense; Matsumoto moves at the slowest possible cinematic pace, while *Bebop*, in the words of Sangamon Taylor, Goes Like Hell. The second half of the tape doesn't possess the unremitting intensity of "Angels," instead fooling around with what feels like a simultaneous homage to Akira and Bad Seed. But if the thematic focus wavers a little, the animation and music remain some of the best ever broadcast. I much prefer the regular version of "Rain" that appears in "Angels" (rather than the alternate vocals on the OST), and the harmonica in episode 6 ("Sympathy for the Devil"; they follow the Dead as well as the blues, it seems) is some of the series' best background music.





Or, no, the opera sequence from "Angels" takes the prize. Faye Valentine's evening out is brought to you by the letter O, for O My Lord I'm In Looooooove... And even that pales in comparison to the fascinating flashback scenes that close the episode. *Cowboy Bebop* is developing its backstory very quietly, but the series is obviously building to something fascinating; there is much more to Mr. Spiegel than he lets on. If somebody does something about the translation, all will be beautiful; paging Neil Nadelman to production, you're needed badly, sir. But even so, *Cowboy Bebop* is just about the best thing going today.

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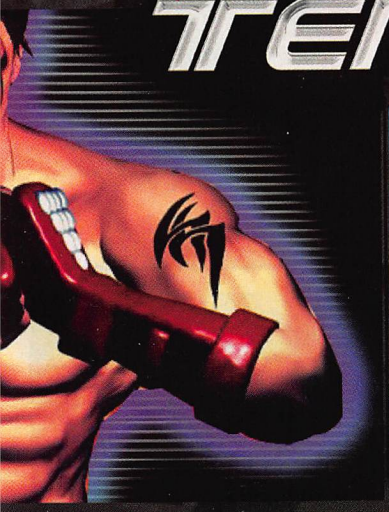


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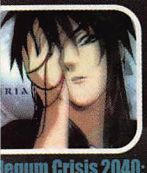












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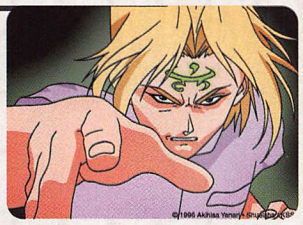
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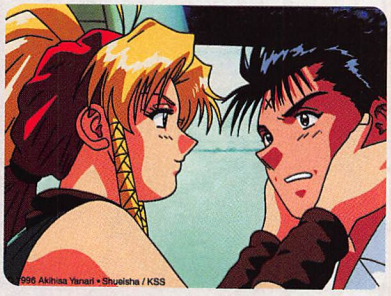
REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER
•1999 ADV FILMS
60 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH
★★★★ *action/drama*



Story: As Chip from *Guilty Gear* would say: Are you ready?
Eric is a teen with some problems. Eric's mother abandoned him and his father to go travel the world. So Eric has developed a serious love/hate relationship with all women. And his father is obsessed with making home-video porn and putting it on the internet. While visiting a secret tribe of people called the Tatoon tribe, Eric's mother promises his hand in marriage to the tribe's priestess if the tribe will spare her life. So, eager to meet her new husband-to-be, the tribe's priestess tracks Eric down and promptly marries him before he knows what happened. Unfortunately, a psychopathic girl from his high school has a crush on Eric and is out to kill his new wife.

In the second episode Eric is getting somewhat used to his new busty wife, and they settle into a relationship that resembles the one between Yurika and Houmei from *Nadesico*. Except that now some strange man in a stylish pink blouse is trying to kill both he and his priestess wife. And somehow the man knows how to wield the shadow power of the Tatoon tribe.

Character Design: The overall design looks much like the characters from *Plastic Little*, but without all the breasts. The design is both original and "like totally done that" at the same time. The high school students are all fairly standard fare, and the main character, Eric, looks like a carbon copy of Yusuke from Yu-Yu Hakusho (*Poltergeist Report*). But Bala (or Nima depending on which version you buy), has an original tribal look when she is all decked out in her battle outfit. She kind of reminds me of Nuku-Nuku.



Animation: Nothing Special, but it definitely doesn't disappoint when the fightin' starts.
Dubbing: As dubs go, this is a good one. The only problem voice would be Eric, who sounds like he's constipated whenever he gets angry, which is 99% of the time.
Soundtrack: What do the Japanese call it? Tissue Paper Music. Pretty, but very weak.
Fight Scenes: They involve a lot of magic (but no "special moves") and some gratuitous butt shots.
Final Analysis: The first time I saw this anime, I was surprised by how much I liked it. The beginning throws you for a loop, and I thought Bala was going to annoy me throughout the entire episode. But the plot is just so off the wall that you have to laugh. And the fact that Eric has a female-based psychosis doesn't help anything. I'm not really sure where this anime is going, but it's having a great time getting there.



MARTIAN SUCCESSOR NADESICO VOL.2

REVIEWED BY DAVE SMITH
•1999 XEBEC/ADV FILMS
75 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH
★★★★ *SCI-FI/ACTION/ROMANCE/COMEDY*

I have enjoyed many shows of its ilk, be they comic, romantic, or mechanized, over the years. In fact, on the surface, it seems unoriginal: Earth versus aliens and love triangles in the background? Been done for over twenty years now. But alone among the many anime I have seen, *Mobile Battleship Nadesico* touches me on a deeply personal level. It is the purest conception of geek fantasy I've seen; I am unashamed (well, only a little ashamed) to say that to whomp ass with the Gekigan-Flare, sail home to the accolades of my comrades, and kiss the cute girl is a close to my conception of what heaven is like.

Of course, I'm one-hundred-percent certified out of my damn mind, so pay my useless gibberish no heed. Except, perhaps, for the bits where I tell you to buy the subtitled edition of Nadesico or get your head kicked in. For this dub, there will be no forgiveness. There will be no peace, in this world or the next. The redneck katana will accept only blood as payment, a holy abundance of blood and splintered kneecaps. I have spoken.

But, ah, I say this only out of love, for I love these people so, Ruri and Megumi and Gort and Ryoko and all the rest of Nadesico's crew of endearing misfits. Akito kisses Megumi, and my heart melts. Joe says goodbye to Nanako, and my heart breaks. Ruri proclaims the entire human race a pack of brain-dead morons, and I shout and cheer in joyous affirmation. The Gekigan-Shoot wins the day for green Earth, and I leap up on my chair howling "WOO-HOO~! THIS SHOW RULES THE FREAKIN WORLD! WHEE!"

Forgive me for kicking intelligent criticism in the groin, but it's that kind of experience. As a rule, anime is best watched in a group; the rule goes double for *Nadesico*. Find some friends, a couple of hours in the evening, and plenty of comfortable chairs before you watch it. The feelings are magnified immensely when you have someone to share them with; if you have any soul at all, you'll leap up on your chair and cheer too. *Nadesico*, particularly at this point in the series, is a great entertainment, with a core of mecha action and the most likable cast of characters I've ever seen. Pick it up.





The $$60,000,000,000 Man

On a desert planet scorched by twin suns, bounty hunters scour the planet looking for Vash the Stampede, a gunslinger so dangerous, a $60,000,000,000 reward has been placed on his head! Vash, also known as the Human Typhoon, has been credited with the destruction of several towns, but miraculously, there is no record of him ever taking a life, and Vash barely even draws his weapon. However, only two things ever happen to those who catch up to Vash - they either crawl away wounded (mostly from self-inflicted damage), or they stagger away in disbelief that such a dork could possibly be the man they are looking for!



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The $$60,000,000,000 Man

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TRIGUN

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ICZELION

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER
•1999 ADV FILMS
60 MINUTES•DUBBED IN ENGLISH
★★★ ACTION/SCI-FI



Story: Wonder twin powers activate! Chaos and Cross are a brother-and-sister team who (unoriginal plot line coming up) want to use the universe as their playground and ultimately destroy it. But in their path stands a race of scantily clad women wearing some powerful armor. Nagisa, a high school girl, is chosen by the white Iczel battle armor to be the next defender of the universe. Unfortunately, Nagisa just wants to be a normal girl who aspires to the pro wrestling circuit. But seeing that her planet and friends are in danger, Nagisa eventually dons her armor to help her Iczelion sisters in the fight against Chaos and Cross. Yaaawwwwnnnnnnn...

Character Design: This is probably the best thing about this anime. The girls sport some classic "anime-ish" designs with sharp skimpy armor, heavy on the lasers and artillery. The armor design did not change too much from the first Iczer anime.

Animation: Not great, but not bad either considering that this anime is not so new anymore. And the animators didn't cheat during the fight scenes.

Dubbing: The dubbing is bearable, but just barely. Nagisa and the Iczel battle-suits were by far the most annoying.

Soundtrack: There is nothing to see here...please disperse.

Fight Scenes: Fairly enjoyable. A lot of MEGA GRAVITON STOMP!

Final Analysis: It would have been a good solid anime in the tradition of the first Iczer anime, except that the main character, Nagisa, was so damn annoying. That girl needs a swift kick in the back of her little school skirt. I wouldn't rush out for this one even if I were an Iczer fan.



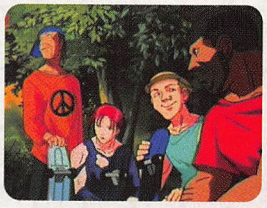


★注意して読んで

刺激的な2-Dビジュアル

NAZCA

REVIEWED BY DAVE SMITH
•1999 GENCO/RADIX/PIONEER
75 MINUTES•DUAL LANGUAGE
★★ ACTION/FANTASY





The creators of *Nazca* presumably intended for the central plot to be the real attraction. Under normal circumstances, it certainly would be, as rivalries arise among friends who harbor the souls of reincarnated Inca warriors. But it's the setup and background that pushes one of my hotter buttons, because I dearly love kendo, and before the show takes off to 16th-century Peru, there is some righteous kendo action on display.

Unfortunately, after episode 1, the kendo is left hanging and replaced with slightly more conventional fantasy action, which isn't nearly as interesting. My main problem is that I simply stand at odds with the style of design on display; it reminds me of Fushigi Yuugi with a Go Nagai influence. The characters, while certainly creative, badly need a touch of Yuu Watase's restraint. At this point, they incorporate far too many goofy frills and bright solid colors. Even throwaway elements seem overdone; the thugs that work over Daimon in episode 3 are a nightmare of cliché and palette abuse, nothing in comparison to the classic thug design of *Please Save My Earth* and *Kyo Kare Ore Wa*.

Between the irksome design, a very poor subtitling job (the script needs at least one more going-over), and an ever-so-slightly iniquitous remix of my favorite Bach fugue, Nazca pushes a few too many of the wrong buttons. Assess the style of the characters for yourself before you decide on it, though, because the animation is of excellent quality (especially on DVD), and Megumi Hayashibara shines through some of the overkill around her with a nicely quiet performance. For myself, I'll be content just to watch the kendo bits a couple of dozen times more.








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Congratulations to this month's winners!

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To enter the ADV/Gamers' Republic Top Five Anime Contest, simply send us a list of your favorite five anime, new or old. Make sure to include your name, address and age and send it to: **Gamers' Republic Top Five Anime, 32123 Lindero Canyon Road, suite 218, Westlake Village, CA 91361**, or e-mail our venerable leader at **dhalverson@gamersrepublic.com**. First prize will receive: A **Sega Dreamcast & Sonic Adventure, The Sonic Movie from ADV,** and a **ONE-YEAR Subscription to Gamers Republic.** Second place will receive The Sonic movie, a Gamers' Republic mouse pad and t-shirt, and a 1-year subscription to GR, and third place will receive the Sonic Movie and a 1-year subscription. Good Luck everyone! For your free ADV catalog (and this is one cool catalog) write to: AD Vision, 5750 Blintiff #217, Houston, TX 77036.

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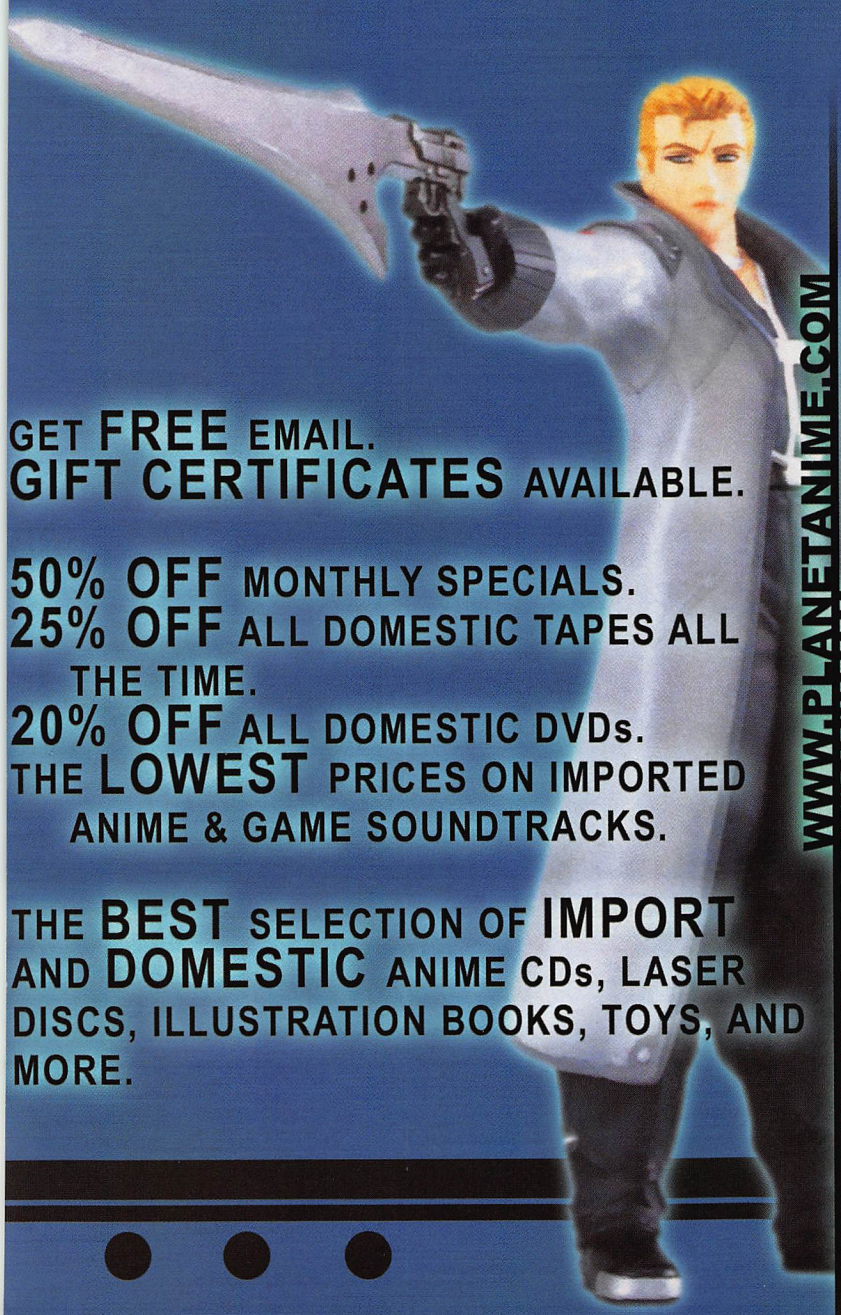
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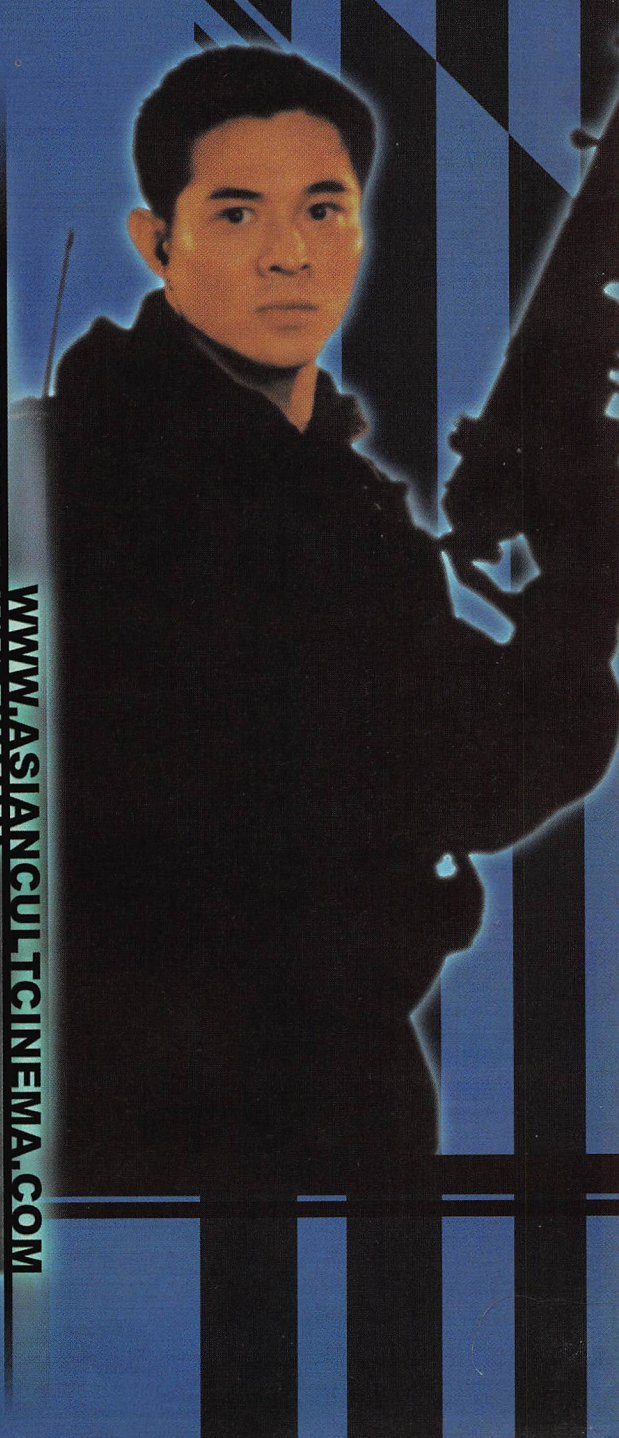


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GAMERS' REPUBLIC INTERVIEWS

SHIRLEY MANSON and Garbage

On the day before Thanksgiving, a date we will not soon forget, we were guests at the final Garbage show before they headed back to the studio to record their third full-length album. During their 20-month tour, Garbage wrapped up with their 300th show at UC Irvine in Orange County, California. During the day we got to witness the rehearsals and observe all the preparation that goes on backstage before they put on a show. Amidst all the mayhem we were able to find out a few things from the band.

TRASH TALKING WITH GARBAGE...

GR: Okay, now I know I need to approach this professionally, but I really appreciate your sound, progression and subjects you choose to write music about. Your music noticeably affects my daily living for the better.

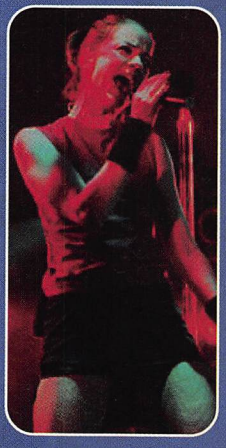
Shirley: Please...go on. We can never get enough, you know. When we perform someplace we know we are the guests at a party that our fans invited us to. We know how much you love us, though we love you just a little bit more.

GR: Being on the road for so many months now, are you eager to get back in the studio to try new sounds?

Garbage: We actually have an extra bus that houses a mini-studio, where we have been experimenting with songs. Tonight you'll hear one of them; it is definitely different from our current sounds. We are currently shuffling around remixes and b-side songs for a double-album release. Our fans are getting bootlegs and being forced to pay absurd amounts of money. So we are going to try and fill that need and offer it to everyone, everywhere.

GR: One of my favorite games, Gran Turismo, happens to also have a track provided by you, "As Heaven Is Wide." It goes without saying that because of your track, I play the game more than I would have. How did you get involved with the project?

Garbage: It came through and we really didn't know what was going to happen from it. We were given a residual rate. God knows, we never thought that song, thanks to the game, would have turned over the money it has.



GR: Has the experience opened you to doing more projects? A lot of us feel your sounds can only compliment a virtual experience.

Garbage: Definitely. We actually licensed a song from our Version 2.0 album for the Gran Turismo 2 game, but we don't get residuals. I guess the game company didn't foresee the potential success first-go-around and doesn't want to pay us more than once this time [laughing].

GR: When Garbage started, what direction did you want to take it? Was crosspollinating different styles and creating androgynous songs a focus or did it just happen?

Butch: Before this I was caught up in the whole punk/alternative scene. Everything was really touch-and-go, and it eventually led in to more Sub Pop stuff. Soon I found myself working on projects that just blew up. I was working on all of these other acts and all I really wanted to do was hang out with Duke and Steve again. I really like to use different technology to f___ around with songs. In the beginning everything needed to be the same, no one wanted to use samples. Too many artists and the people who buy the music have the attitude, "Well I only listen to rock music" and they will snub pop music, or snub hip-hop, jazz or whatever. We make an effort to keep an open and uninhibited attitude toward the sound we want or enjoy. We combine an awful lot of things, rock and techno and punk. In the end it is safe to say we are pop.



GR: Your lyrics are very androgynous. Is this intentional?

Shirley: Yes they are, definitely, because we did not want any of the songs to be exclusive to one person; we wanted a lot of people to relate to them. I am always disappointed when you listen to songs and then you hear the band explain what they mean and what you thought about it was complete opposite of what it really meant.

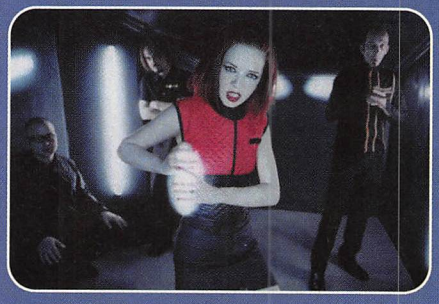
GR: So then, who is your favorite singer?

Shirley: Frank Sinatra. I just love him and love his singing. I like listening to very relaxing music when I am at home, late at night. Frank soothes my ruffled feathers [laughing]. He was the original gangster, the original punk, he encompassed everything. You know...he even has a credit card here in the U.S., which is quite incredible.

GR: Thanks for this time during your hectic schedule. You have fulfilled a dream for me personally and for many of us here at the magazine. Much grace in tonight's show.

Garbage: Not a problem. It's been nice. See you later tonight.

The night ended with us sharing a few crates of some primo champagne with Lit, compliments of Garbage. The show was amazing, the energy was stellar and everyone there was witness to a great performance.



Audiophiles

What GR is listening to this month

D Halverson	B Fiechter	M Hobbs	T Stratton	Pooch
1. **KORN** *Issues*	1. **MAGNOLIA** *Soundtrack*	1. **FIONA APPLE** *When the Pawn...*	1. **SNOOP DOGG** *Last Supper*	1. **BEASTIE BOYS** *Sounds of Science*
2. **311** *Sound System*	2. **ANNE DUDLEY** *Ancient and Modern*	2. **THE ORB** *U.F.Off: Best of the Orb*	2. **DEL** *Both sides of the Brain*	2. **HANDSOME BOY MODELING SCHOOL** *So...How's Your Girl?*
3. **MOTLEY CRÜE** *Entertainment Or Death*	3. **FIONA APPLE** *When the Pawn...*	3. **NOBUKAZU TAKEMURA** *Scope*	3. **GARBAGE** *Version 2.0*	3. **DR. DRE** *Chronic 2001*
4. **END OF DAYS** *Soundtrack*	4. **GREEN MILE** *Soundtrack*	4. **THE BEATLES** *Magical Mystery Tour*	4. **FRANK SINATRA** *Show Stoppers*	4. **GEORGE WINSTON** *Plains*
5. **FIONA APPLE** *When the Pawn...*	5. **ERIC SERRA** *The Messenger*	5. **HOOVERPHONIC** *Blue Wonder Power Milk*	5. **OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN** *Back to Basics*	5. **RAGE AGAINST THE MACHI** *Battle of Los Angeles*

D Smith	E Fear	B Elmquist	G Abraham	J Corby
1. **PUBLIC ENEMY** *Fear of a Black Planet*	1. **NINE INCH NAILS** *The Fragile*	1. **DREAM THEATER** *Metropolis part 2*	1. **PET SHOP BOYS** *Nightlife*	1. **CRUMBSUCKERS** *Life of Dreams*
2. **X JAPAN** *Art of Life*	2. **CITY OF ANGELS** *Soundtrack*	2. **METALLICA** *S & M*	2. **FREESTYLERS** *F.S.U.K. 2*	2. **NEWCLEUS** *Jam On This!*
3. **VARIOUS ARTISTS** *COUp Perfect Memory*	3. **MARK O'CONNOR** *Markology*	3. **CYNIC** *Textures*	3. **ALPHA** *Come From Heaven*	3. **JUNGLE BROTHERS** *Raw Deluxe*
4. **YOKO KANNO** *Brain Powerd OST 2*	4. **THE DREGS** *Industry Standard*	4. **REFUSED** *The Shape of Punk to Come*	4. **JUSTICE** *Justice*	4. **MIDNIGHT STAR** *Planetary Invasion*
5. **SHOUJO KAKUMEI UTENA** *OST 1*	5. **VINCE GILL** *Let There Be Peace on Earth*	5. **METAL CHURCH** *Blessing in Disguise*	5. **AMBUSH** *Saigon*	5. **RATT** *81-91*



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Music from the mature-rated video games.



There's no arguing Palisades Marketing's (via Kotobukiya) Final Fantasy VIII figures are some of the best ever produced for a video game, and now you can attain your very own set of liquid-clear versions. These stunning limited-edition figures won't last long, so if you are so inclined, commence on inquiring through the old dot com at palisadesmarketing.com. ...



...And while you're there you may as well scope out the latest from the Tekken 3 series. Forrest Law, Anna Williams, King, and Hwoarang are waiting to kick ass on the rest of your action figures. I hear they throw a wicked combo.



There seems to be no limit to Mr. McFarlane's creative genius. The first new line from McFarlane Toys for 2000 (available Q1), Spawn Nitro Riders, look absolutely bad ass. From whence they came we do not know. But I am sure we will soon find out.



Believe it or not these Princess Mononoke sculptures actually do Hayao Miyazaki's inspired designs complete justice. In fact, they are probably the most gorgeous we have ever seen. An Inteleg exclusive, the sculptures can be found for around $49.99 at animatrix.com. Hurry. The cool little snap-together Brain Powered model at left will only set you back $15.95. Go now, my child...

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TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER STRATEGY SPECIAL!

When we first decided to do a Tony Hawk strategy, we had no idea that we could actually do a book on it. That said, don't hope to find tips on how to find that last letter to spell S-K-A-T-E, or how to get all of the hidden tapes. Instead we thought it would be best to bring some of the most interesting and obscure tricks and combos the game offers. What we chose to put in the following pages showcases the sheer madness that can be found and ultimately is what keeps you and us constantly soaking in this incredible game. Level design is absolutely brilliant, and the ability to create several lines to get to the same spot is refreshing. Look for more in-depth strategies at ***www.gamersrepublic.com***

TONY HAWK
signature moves

- 540 Board Varial L, L + Sq
- 360 Flip to Mute D, R + Sq
- Kickflip MCtwist R, R + Cir
- 900 R, D + Cir

Warehouse: Woodland Hills

Those familiar with the game will already know this, but the Warehouse level is one of the best and enforces the fact that this game is deep in gameplay strategies. To get the most points, spit out a string of tricks to get the special meter flashing; then from the far corner, behind the half-pipe, launch off the small quarter-pipe so that you are close to the wall (1). As you re-enter the transition, hit the transfer ramp to fly through the secret room. During this time, bust your signature grab or ollie move. As you descend, you should be approaching the steel rail. Lock on to it and quickly ollie/kickflip to the ramp coping. Here is where things really get fun. To keep balance and speed, you will need to continuously ollie and grind across the lip. When you hit the far bend, you will need to make a decision. End the trick, or try to keep it going. If you time it right you can ollie and land on the other side of the bend. This results in the Holy Sh** Grind—easily the hardest, most impressive move we believe possible. The other is to ollie off the bend onto the Big Rail. (Fact: Jamie Thomas did this trick when it was unnamed. The words used to describe it are the same as its name in the game.)

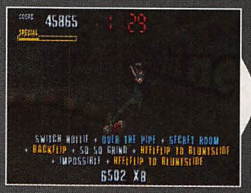












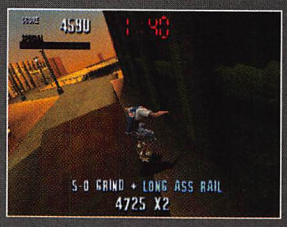




On the far quarter-pipe you can ollie/fastplant onto the High Rail. Try to keep it going on the lip below (2).

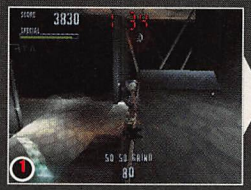
BOB BURNQUIST
signature moves

- Backflip U, D + Cir
- One Footed Smith R, R + Tri
- Burntwist L, U + Tri



School: Miami

The half-pipes and rails in this level are some of the best. There is so much to pick apart here, it was hard to choose a trick. What we chose is the Long Ass Rail. To do it, follow the trail at the far left of the school, leading down to the pools. Ollie up onto the planter that stretches all the way to the lower level. Grind the entire thing, slipping in a variety of tricks and at the bottom you will get a Long Ass Rail multiplier.



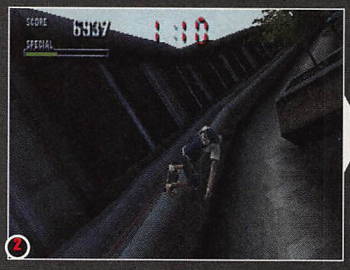


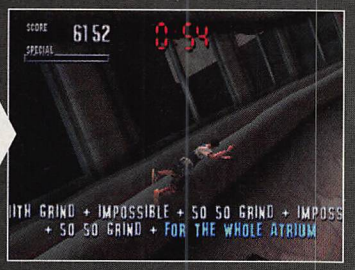
GEOFF ROWLEY
signature moves

- Darkside Grind L, R + Tri
- Backflip U, D + Cir
- Double Hardflip R, D + Sq

Mall: New York

Here are two great grinds that can be used for huge points and flat-out look cool. The first is on the right side of the coffee-house rail. A path suddenly ends and has a kicker ramp that is needed to get the Hidden Tape (1). Ollie onto the start of the guardrail leading to the ramp and use it to ollie across to the rafters. The second nice multiplier is outside, near the end of the level. Roll up on to the transition on both the left or right side and grind across the entire edge (2).





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Contest 1: Skatepark, Chicago

This trick takes some practice, but is very satisfying. Above the half-pipe in the corner are rafters. Hit your normal line to build your special meter, then head for the transition ramp that transfers into the half-pipe. Ollie off of the lip and you will thrust up to the rafters (1). Quickly tap the grind button to lock onto the rafter and continue sliding or grinding across the beams until you are hovering above the pool (2). From here you can end the trick or ollie off the rafter and land on the lip of the pool, where you can continue to circle the entire pool. Huge points can be had here.

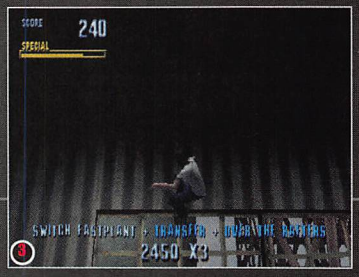


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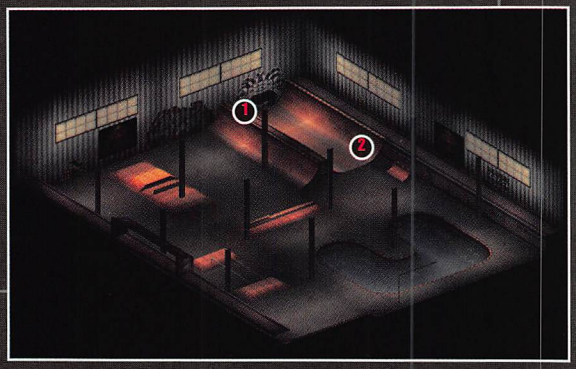


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If you overshoot the initial ollie, you will still get a nice multiplier for clearing the rafters (3).



3



Bucky Lasek signature moves

- Fingerflip Airwalk L, R + Cir
- Varial Heelflip Judo D, U + Sq
- Kickflip MCtwist R, R + Cir

Andrew Reynolds signature moves

- Backflip U, D + Cir
- Triple Kickflip L, L + Sq
- Heelflip to Bluntside D, D + Tri

Downtown: Minneapolis

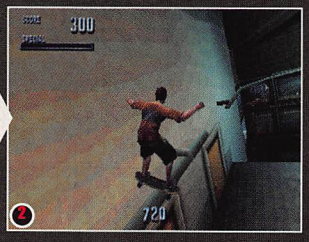
A fun spot that many do not know of holds a challenging segmented rail that forms a complete circle. Take the first right, and climb the short hill. Here you will see a building to the right. Continue to skate straight through the glass doors and a ramp will lead to the second level (1). At the top of the transition, ollie or fastplant onto the rail and try to circle the entire rail (2). (Note: We have completed a circle, but unfortunately no multiplier bonus was rewarded. It still doesn't stop us from seeing how many laps we can complete.)



1



2



2

Rune Glifberg signature moves

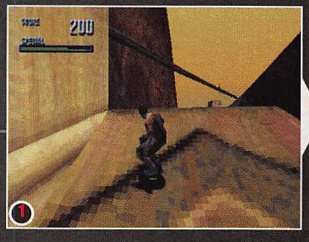
- Kickflip MCtwist R, R + Cir
- Christ Air L, R + Cir
- Front Backflip Kickflip U, D + Sq

Chad Muska signature moves

- Frontflip D, U + Cir
- 360 Shove it Rewind R, R + Sq
- 1 Footed 5-0 Thumpin R, D + Tri

Downhill Jam: Phoenix

There is much air and long grinds that can be found here, but the most difficult task is probably getting to the Hidden Tape. Here is how you do it. Take the rail leading to the letter "A" (1). From here take a second rail that will dump you off if front of a dam outlet (2). Wall-ride across the gap (3), then quickly ollie up onto the rock bridge (4). Here you will come to another outlet that you will need to wall-ride across (5). The final step is to ollie off of the end of the path over to a set of rails (6).



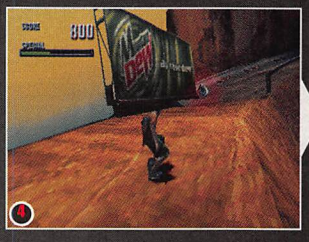
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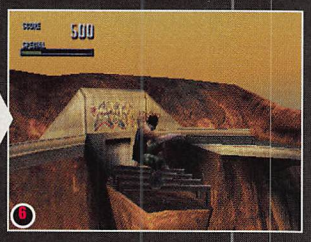
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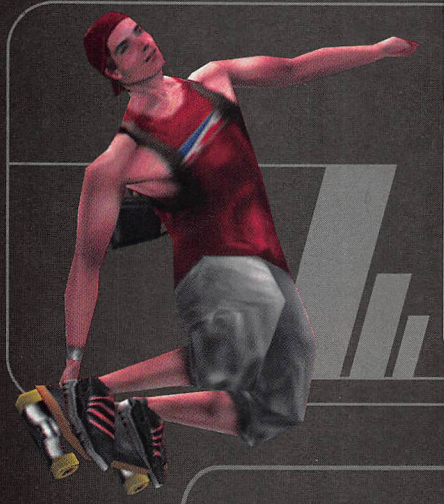
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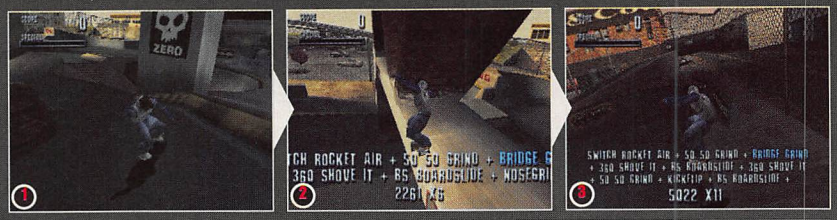
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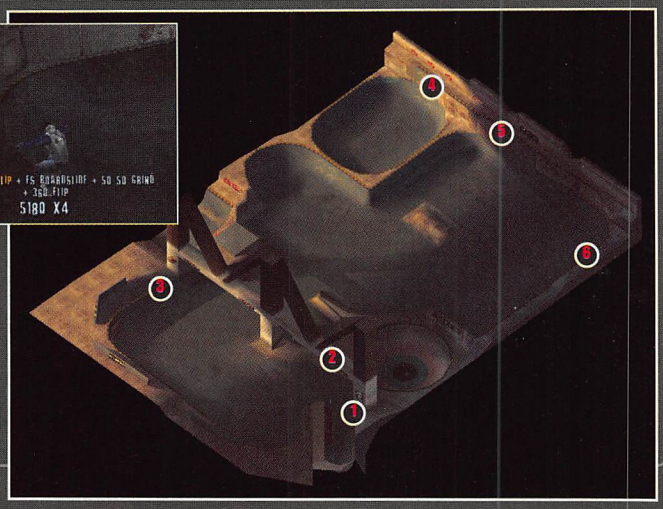

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Contest 2: Burnside, Portland

At the start of your run hit the last part of the right bank (1). If you time it right, you should be close enough to the bridge, and you can grind along each of the four sections (2). It takes practice, but can be done. In fact, you can ollie off of the last bridge section onto the small concrete quarter-pipe below and stretch the trick across the length of the edge (3).







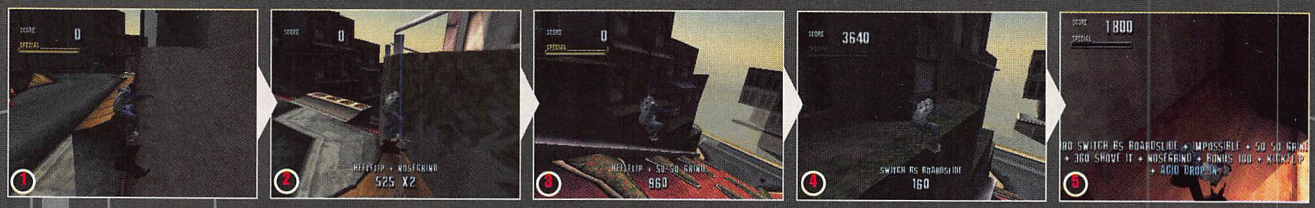
KAREEM CAMPBELL
signature moves

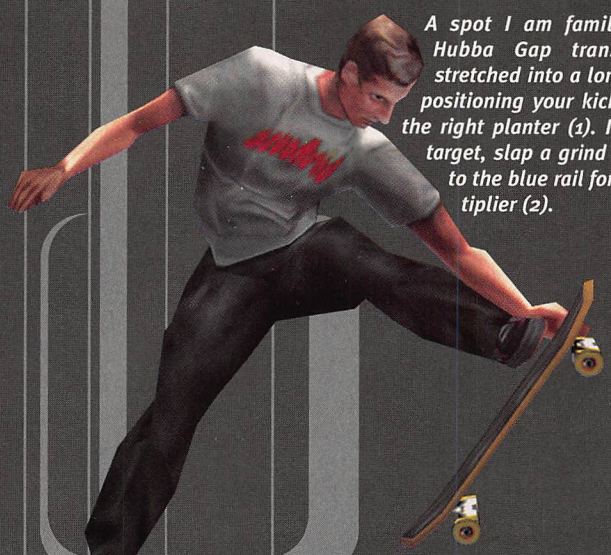
- Frontflip D, U + Cir
- Kickflip Underflip L, R + Sq
- Casper Slide U, D + Tri

Over in the far bowl, you can pop a trick onto the tall ledge and grind the length of it (4,5). Towards the end you can finish your combo, or ollie out and land on the lip of the pool below (6).

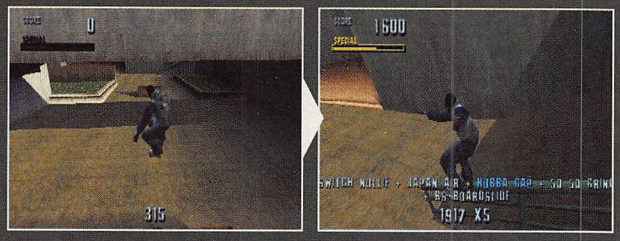
Streets: San Francisco

Here is one of the most original approaches to creating a line. From the start, ollie and grind the lip of the quarter-pipe directly in front of you (1). Here's the tricky part. As you roll off of the ramp you will get a split-second window, where your skater will hit the top of the kicker ramp below (2). During your grind, you should be holding down the ollie button so that when you hit the ramp you can spring off of it, all the way across Lombard Street (3). If timed correctly, you will land on the planter steps high above (4). Tap the grind button to start the combo upon landing and ollie over the second step, otherwise you will not be able to complete the insane trick. Lock onto the third step with a grind and continue to take the corner. When the ledge ends, ollie out and wall-ride into the quarter-pipe below (5). This will apply an Acid Drop-In bonus. Good Luck!





A spot I am familiar with, the Hubba Gap transfer can be stretched into a longer combo by positioning your kick trick over to the right planter (1). If you hit your target, slap a grind and ollie over to the blue rail for an extra multiplier (2).



JAMIE THOMAS
signature moves

- Frontflip D, U + Cir
- 540 Flip L, D + Sq
- One Footed Nosegrind U, U + Tri

ELISSA STEAMER
signature moves

- Backflip U, D + Cir
- Judo Madonna L, D + Cir
- Primo Grind L, L + Tri

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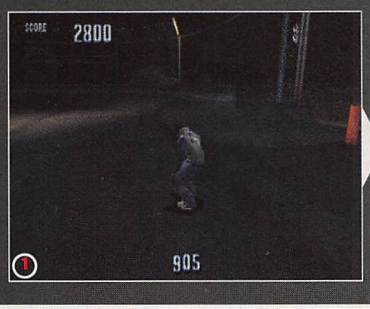
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Contest 3: Roswell, New Mexico

By this point, Roswell should be a playground for you. One of the most amusing transfer bonuses we've come across is the ET Grind. To do it, turn right at the start of your run. Across the far fence you will notice a set of three rails. To your right will be the lower and longer rail, and the other is higher and shorter in length. To do the ET Grind, ollie onto the lower rail and grind across (1). As the gaps separate the rails, ollie over them and re-grind the second, then third rail. At the end of the third rail, ollie through the lab doors (2).





So there you have it! We wish you much grace and little frustration in your attempts to learn and tweak these tips into your own combos. We tried to showcase a variety of different and thought-provoking series of tricks to compel you to keep innovating your play style. Below you will find some bonus tidbits as an incentive to complete the game with all of the normal characters. Each one has some great attributes, as well as funny signature moves. Don't forget to check out the website for more strategies and helpful hints.

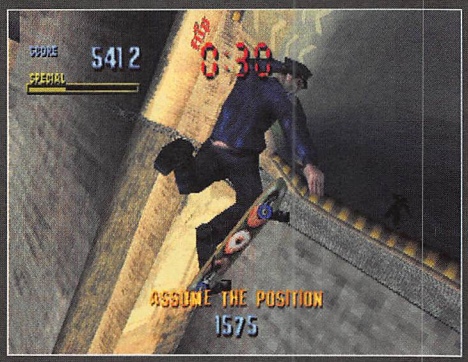
OFFICER DICK

Complete all thirty tapes and get all three medals with any one skater to unlock this "secret" character

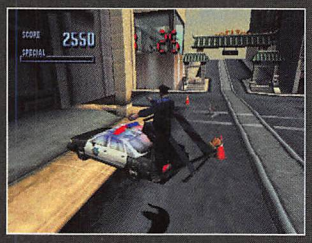
signature moves

- **Yeeeehaw Frontflip** D, U + Cir
- **Assume the Position** L, L + Cir
- **Neckbreak grind** L, R + Tri



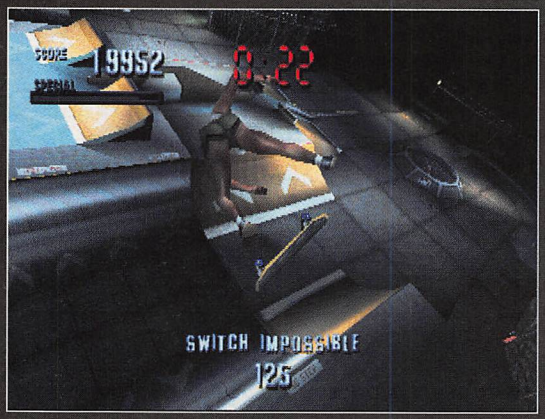


At first the novelty of skating as a police officer is funny. After a short stint with the man in blue you learn he is just as good a character as any of the pros. Finish the game with him, winning Gold metals in all three competitions and you will unlock the great video footage of the development team skating. This clip may be the best of the bunch, too.









This little betty is an awkward addition, but she shreds like hell. Even without her special meter flashing she can launch incredible airs off a ramp. In fact, once you have a go playing her, you might retire your current favorite in exchange for the petite girlie. Using her to play the game will help you reach transfers you couldn't before and help you discover new combos you might have only heard of. She is very fast and lets it all hang out. I could follow that sentence up with a joke, but you can make your own. Now you fondle the controls to see what you can make her do.

PRIVATE CARERRA

Private Carrera replaces Officer Dick when you pause, hold L1, and press: *Triangle, Up, Triangle, Up, Circle, Up, Left, Triangle.* The screen will not shake, and you should immediately end run and quit. Officer Dick will now be replaced by a well-proportioned Army brat. You will notice that two of her tricks are the "wrong" animations to what their names are.

signature moves

- **The Well Hardflip** R, L + Sq
- **Ho-Ho-Ho** L, U + Tri
- **Somi Spin** L, D + Cir



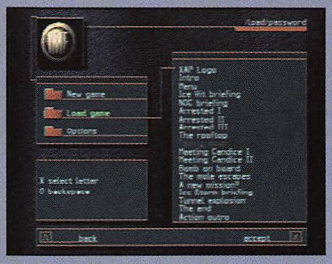






As you probably saw moments before coming to this section, Neversoft and Activision have gotten together once again to create Tony Hawk's Pro Skater for the N64. The strategies here will also work for that version, so if you haven't had the pleasure of playing the game yet because you don't own a PlayStation, hold onto this strategy. It will help you discover the different levels of appreciation you will find with the game.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE



DEVELOPER NOTES
Enter "TTOPFSECRETT" as a password. (Ignore "Bad Password message.)

DISABLE AI
Enter "SCAREDSTIFF" as a password. (Ignore "Bad Password" message.)

SLOW MOTION
Enter "IMTIREDTODAY" as a password. (Ignore "Bad Password message.)

SUPER JUMPS
Enter "BIONICJUMPER" as a password. (Ignore "Bad Password" message.)

TURBO MODE
Enter "GOOUTTAMYWAY" as a password. (Ignore "Bad Password" message.)

VIGILANTE 8- SECOND OFFENSE

PASSWORD SCREEN
Highlight "Game Status" at the Options menu. Then press L1 + R1.

NO GRAVITY
Enter NO_GRAVITY as a password. Gravity will be reduced to the point that your car will almost float when a bump is hit.

BIG WHEELS
Enter GO_MONSTER as a password.

HIGH SUSPENSIONS
Enter JACK_IT_UP as a password.

SUPER MISSILES
Enter BLAST_FIRE as a password to increase the damage from missiles.

FAST ACTION
Enter QUICK_PLAY as a password to enable a random arcade feature.

ORIGINAL LEVELS
Pause game play, remove the game disc, then insert an original Vigilante 8 disc. The message "V8 levels enabled" will confirm correct completion of the trick. Insert the Vigilante 8: Second Offense disc again. Quit the current game to access the original Vigilante 8 levels as well as the new levels.

MEDAL OF HONOR

All of these passwords can be entered on the game's Enigma machine. To get there, choose "Options" from the main War Room menu, then choose "Passwords." If you enter the password correctly, the Enigma machine will flash green.

SECRET CODE!
"DENNISMODE" — this password unlocks "Nifty Multiplayer Powerups" on the secret codes screen. Developed by the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) to combat the Nazi threat, activating these abilities adds a whole new dimension to the two-player game.

Once the Powerups code is unlocked, activate it on the Secret Codes Screen. (To get to there, select "Options" from the main War Room menu and then select "Secret Codes.")

4X DAMAGE
All shots do four times as much damage.

4X FIRE RATE
All weapons (except grenades) fire at four times their normal rate.

ACHILLES MODE
Player does not take damage— unless shot in the foot.

AIR WALKING
Gravity suddenly has only a small influence on you.

BLINK
Use the Action button to dodge bullets.

FORCE
A giant magnet has been switched on— sucking you and your gun towards it.

FREEZE OPPONENT
He can turn and aim, but he can't run away.

HALF ENEMY DAMAGE
Your bullets only do half their normal damage.

PLAYER AMMO
Get everything your opponent has.

RANDOM CONTROLS
You're forced to learn a new control scheme— fast!

REFLECTING SHOTS
Your shots will bounce off of the walls.

REVERSE CONTROLS
Up is down. Right is left.

EXPENDABLE

EASTER EGG
This must be done while playing the game. Pause and enter: Left Trigger, Left, Right Trigger, Right, X, X, Down, Down, Right Trigger, Left Trigger.

EXTRA LIVES
This must be done while playing the game. Pause and enter: A, B, X, Y, Left Trigger, Right Trigger, Up, Down, Left, Right.

LEVEL SELECT
This must be done while playing the game. Pause and enter: Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Y.



GOD MODE AND ALL WEAPONS
While in play, pause and enter: Up, Down, Left, Right,Left Trigger, Right Trigger, Left, Right, Start.

GRENADES
This must be done while playing the game. Pause and enter: Down, Down, Down, Down, Down, Up, Up, Up, Up, Right Trigger.

INSTANT WIN
This must be done while playing the game. Pause and enter: Left Trigger, Right Trigger, Left Trigger, Right Trigger, Left, Right, Left, Right, Y, X.

LEVEL SHIP
This must be done while playing the game. Pause and enter: Y, Y, X, X, Left Trigger, Right Trigger, Down, Down, Up, Up.



SHIELDS
This must be done while playing the game. Pause and enter: Up, Down, Left, Right, X, Up, Down, Left, Right, Y.

PlayStation — Grand Theft Auto 2

You can combine several of these codes together. For example, you can start a game with 1,000,000 dollars, 5X multiplier and all weapons.

1,000,000 Dollars
Enter "BIGSCORE" as a player name.

5X Multiplier
Enter "HIGHFIVE" as a player name.



All Weapons
Enter "NAVARONE" as a player name.

Display Coordinates
Enter "WUGGLES" as a player name.

Game Music
Insert CD in an audio CD player to hear music tracks 2 and higher.



Free Money
Steal a taxi and pick up people, they pay you about $5 per second. Be patient they don't always get in. They pay you until you drive recklessly or if you are being chased by cops.

Maximum Wanted Level
Enter "DESIRES" to set Wanted level to 4.

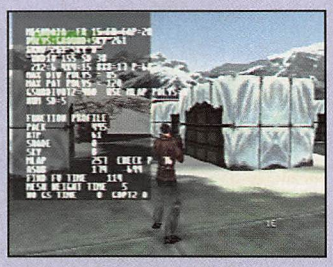
No Police
Enter "LOSEFEDS" as a player name.

Select Level
Enter "ITSALLUP" as a player name.

Tune Car Radio
Press Up to change the radio stations.

Unlimited Energy
Enter "LIVELONG" as a player name.

PlayStation — Tomorrow Never Dies



Many of these codes will also make you invulnerable for awhile, but eventually the effects wear off. Just re-enter the code when that happens

50 Medical Kits
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Triangle, Select. (Correct entry will resume the game.)

All Weapons
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), L1 (x2), R1 (x2) for weapons in the current mission. (Correct entry will resume the game.)

Debug Mode
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), L2, R2, L2. (Correct entry resumes the game.)

(Note: To disable, press Select (x2), Circle (x2), R2, L2, R2 at the pause screen.)

Full Health
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Up (x2), Down. (Correct entry resumes the game.)

HUD Toggle
While playing a mission, press "Start" to access pause menu then press the following buttons in this order: Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Left, Right, Select.

Invincibility
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Triangle (x4) to make the character invincible and able to walk through objects.

Level Select
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), L1 (x2), Circle, L1 (x2). (A tone confirms correct entry.)

Minimum Health
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Down (x2), Up. (Correct entry resumes the game.)

Toggle Light Source
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Select (x2), Circle (x2). Reenter to de-activate. (Correct entry resumes the game.) This code makes it so that there is no ground below you and you can see through some walls.

Toggle Spy Camera
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), R2 (x2). To deactivate reenter code. (Note: Bond will not be able to move while the camera is on.)

View All FMV Sequences
Complete the game in Agent mode to unlock Movie mode. To view a FMV, select "Mov" at the Options menu.

Alternately, press Select (x2), Circle (x2), L1 (x7) at the main menu. (A tone confirms correct entry.)

Win Mission
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Select, Circle. (Correct entry will resume the game.)

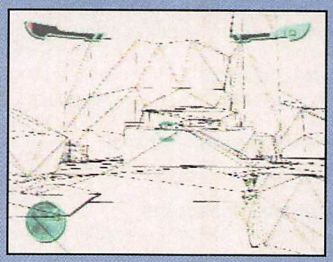
Refill Health
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Up (x2), Select. (Correct entry resumes the game.)

Limited Invincibility
Pause the game. Then press Select (x2), Circle (x2), Triangle (x4) to become invincible in parts of the game where health packs are not used, such as in cars and on skis. (Correct entry resumes game.)

Nintendo 64 — Armorines- Project S.W.A.R.M.

Run Faster
Pause the game. Select "Cheats" at the pause menu. Then enter "SONIC" as a code to run nearly twice as fast.

Wireframe Mode
Pause the game. Select "Cheats" at the pause menu. Then enter "SKETCHY" as a code.



Zombie Revenge

Cheat Mode
To open the cheats, play and accumulate points in the VMU mini-game. Earn enough to open the Eternal Life, Area Select, Free Continue, and Free Time Limit cheat options in the game's original mode.

Alternate Costumes
To change costumes, highlight a character then hold Start and press B, X, or Y.

DONKEY KONG 64

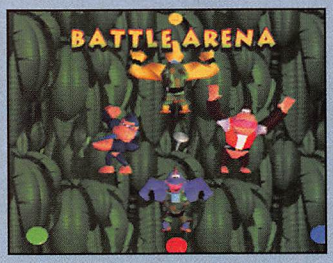
GET CAMERA
To photograph all of the Banana Fairies in the game, you will need to get the camera first. As Tiny, go to the island that is shaped like a banana-head. Shrink down and go inside the hole. The big Banana Fairy will talk to you and give you the camera.

WATCH MOVIES
Find and photograph two Banana Fairies to unlock the DK Theater option in the Mystery menu on the Main menu. This option allows all 14 of the game's animation sequences to be viewed after you see them in the game.



ANIMAL MINI-GAMES BONUS STAGES
Find and photograph six Banana Fairies, locate Rambi the rhino and Enguarde the swordfish to unlock their mini-games in the Mystery menu on the Main menu.

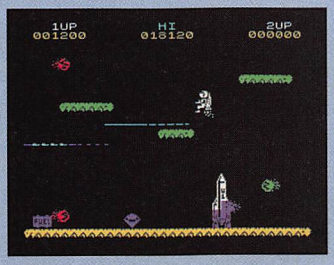
REFIGHT ALL BOSSES
Find and photograph 10 Banana Fairies to unlock the Boss Battle option in the Mystery menu on the Main menu. This allows you to refight any Boss that already has been defeated.



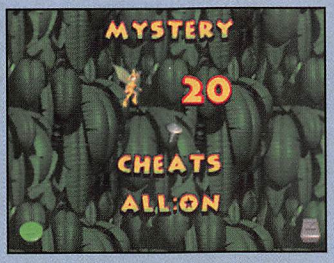
PLAY AS KRUSHA IN MULTIPLAYER
To play as Krusha in the multiplayer games, find and photograph 15 Banana Fairies. Go to the Mystery menu on the Main menu and turn Krusha on. Then go to the Kong Battle menu on the Main menu and Krusha will now be a selectable character in the multiplayer games.



SNIDE'S MINI-GAMES
There are eight mini-games available for play after finding all 40 Snide Blueprints. Go back into the main game and go to a Snide hideout and he will now have an option to access the mini-games by pressing the up C button. The games available for play are Kremling Kosh!, Bonkers Barrel Bandit!, Beaver Bother!, Searchlight Seek!, Krazy Kong Klamour!, Peril Path Panic!, Big Bug Bash! and Teetering Turtle Trouble!.



CLASSIC RARE JETPAC GAME
Collect at least 15 Banana Medals. Then go visit Cranky to play the Jetpac game. Get 5,000 points in the game to collect the Rareware Coin. You will also need to find and photograph six Banana Fairies in order to unlock Rare's classic Jetpac game option in the Mystery menu on the Main menu.



ALL ITEMS CHEAT OPTIONS
Find and photograph all 20 Banana Fairies to unlock the Cheats option in the Mystery menu on the Main menu.

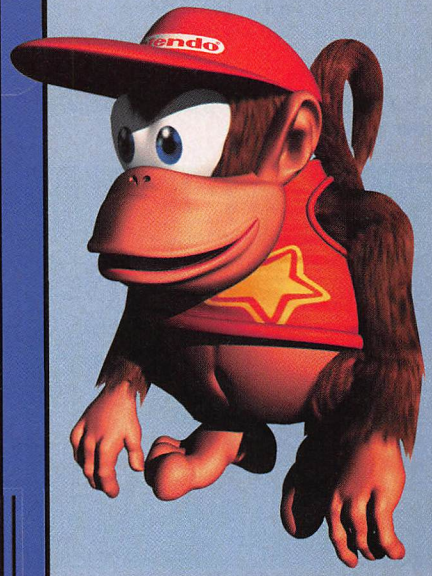
UNLOCK MULTIPLAYER GAMES
Go to the first level in adventure mode, where you find Diddy. Locate the big pad with King K. Rool's face on it that is in front of Funky's Place. Stand on the pad and press the Z trigger. You will be transported to a Battle Arena where you must defeat a band of enemies. Once the timer runs out, you will receive a crown and have the ability to play two different multiplayer games — a third-person death match-like game, and a multiplayer version of the Battle Arena.

ALTERNATE ENDING SEQUENCE
Successfully complete the game after collecting all of the Golden bananas to view the normal ending, with an extra sequence of K. Lumsy taking the Kongs for a ride. For an added bonus, successfully complete the game after collecting all of the items to view the normal ending, the K. Lumsy sequence, and an extra sequence featuring Cranky.

HAIRDO SAYS IT ALL
Look at the hair color of a Kasplat when one is encountered. The color will reveal what color Blueprint he is holding. For example, if he has blue hair, he's holding the blue blueprint. If he has white hair, then he has nothing.

201 BANANAS
Collect all 200 known bananas so that Donkey Kong gets his hoard back. After collecting all 20 Banana Fairies, a message requesting you to visit the Head Fairy will appear. You must have Tiny to visit her. She will show you the way to the 201st banana, which has a Rareware sticker on it.

ACCESS CLASSIC ARCADE DK GAME
In the Frantic Factory level, use the Gorilla-Grab to operate the lever in front of the original Donkey Kong game and successfully complete all four stages twice. You will be awarded a Nintendo Coin. Then find and photograph six Banana Fairies. The classic arcade game will now be available in the Mystery menu on the Main menu.



GENE SIMMONS

Gamers' Republic talks about the making of New Line Cinema's Detroit Rock City *with the legendary Gene Simmons (KISS), Adam Rifkin (director,* Detroit Rock City*) and Tim Sullivan (executive producer,* Detroit Rock City*).*

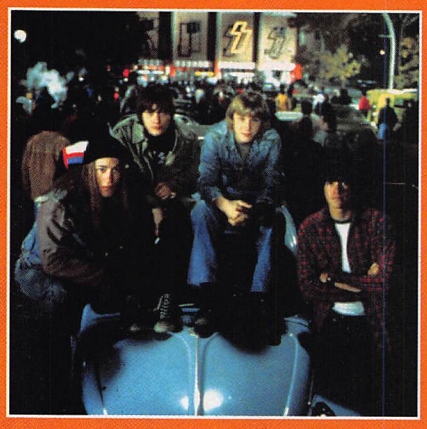
GR: How instrumental was Kiss in the creation of Detroit Rock City?

Gene Simmons: The history of this is that I had been developing a motion picture which was going to be a big-budget science fiction epic. It seemed likely that it would take over two years to mount this thing, and then a script came to me via Katherine Haas and Barry Levine, which seemed like a shorter, sweeter, more fun idea. But I didn't want it to compete with the bigger idea, so I said, "Let's develop this as an idea for television." It seemed very clear to me that this big-budget fantasy film would take too long, so we killed off the other project, stepped this one up and submitted it directly to New Line. We sat down with the powers that be and the story became about four special fans, each on their own special journey to see KISS in Detroit Rock City on the Yellow Brick Road. KISS had very little to do with it except be lucky enough to appear in this classic.

GR: Did you have a hand in choosing the acts that would cover your legendary songs? What about the actors?

GS: On the surface of it all it seems like a master plan, but like all great things, it just sort of happens. I sort of stayed in the background in terms of the artists who got involved. The record companies called a number of their favors in. Van Halen I'm sure was on it because I discovered those guys, and felt they owed a debt. Or not. Maybe they just wanted to be a part of it because it was fun. Everclear came on board unbeknownst to me, doing a great cover of "The Boys are Back in Town." It all happened very organically. In a film there's usually a distinction of what people do, but pretty much everybody rolled up their sleeves on this one and did whatever they had to do. It was a very peaceful set. We're all very proud of the film.

GR: Are you pleased with the end product to your first feature film?



GS: I was thrilled in a very real way. Because of this film, all of a sudden I've got so much on my plate it's difficult to get up in the morning and return all my phone calls. It's unbelievable. I've got 15 things in various stages of development including a Jim Carrey project at Disney, as well as with Harrison Ford, Richard Gere and George Clooney all on separate projects. I can't say this action would have happened were it not for Detroit Rock City and my association with Adam Rifkin. The truth is, actually releasing a film is the only game in town. If you can get a film released, the hurdles are so astronomical that actually getting your name up in lights is the big [success]. I imagine for every movie that gets developed, there's a hundred that never see the light of day.

GR: How were the media in terms of their response and receptiveness to Detroit Rock City?

Tim Sullivan: It was not the *Titanic* of 1999, but let's say that this film has finally had its day in court. There are a lot of films that come out every year, and perhaps the film could have benefited from a better marketing plan. But Adam, Gene and I were all very proud of the film itself and we're very excited that it was formatted to DVD and more people will have a chance to see the film now that it's going to be around forever for everyone to enjoy. The fans of this film, and there are many, are fanatical about it. The DVD will add many unique features to the film not offered on the big screen.

GR: Do you feel that it will find its audience more on DVD and VHS as opposed to the cinema?

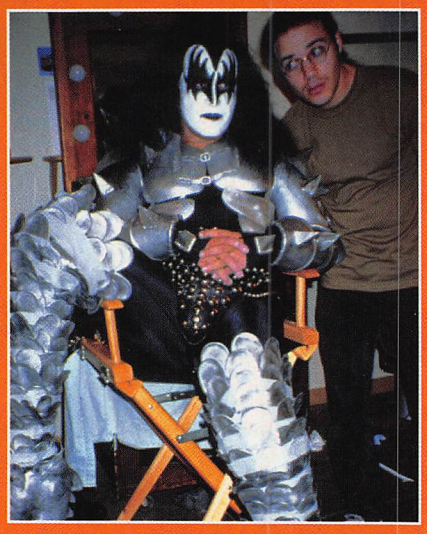
GS: You know, hindsight is easy. New Line did a fabulous job. Everybody really worked their butts off, but the important thing is that a good quality motion picture was released. Let's just put it this way: there are nine horses that run in a race; every one of them is a champion, but only one or two can be first place and second place. We're very proud of the film and we believe we have a quality motion picture that people really love. As far as the iconic nature of some of the sound bites, people come up to me on the street all the time and do phrases off the movie. At a different time, a different period, it could have been a number one movie.

GR: Adam, what movies had you done prior to DRC?

Adam Rifkin: I wrote and directed a movie called The Chase with Charlie Sheen. I wrote a movie called *Mouse Hunt*, and for Dreamworks I wrote a movie called *Small Soldiers*. I've done some movies here and there, but those are the highlights I suppose. And now there's *Detroit Rock City.*

GR: Have you ever thought about producing a video game or alternative form of media?

AR: Yes, I would love to produce a video game and/or any other form of alternative media. I'm open to all sorts of different projects.



GR: Bowie has recently collaborated on a video game, and we know Rockstar Games is working on KISS: Psycho Circus. Are any of the band members involved with the game's concept or progress?

GS: I am, but the rest of the band is not. Gathering of Developers' Psycho Circus game shipped 1.5 million units, which I'm told by industry standards is enormous. I'm told that if you sell a million, much less ship that amount, it's considered a blockbuster, so they seem to be very gung-ho about it.

GR: Have you thought about taking Psycho Circus and translating it into a film?

GS: The KISS Psycho Circus cartoon show is finalizing now in the next two weeks or so. It will be a Saturday morning cartoon.

GR: KISS now has a whole universe of high-quality McFarlane merchandise available with action figures, a magazine, and a comic book. How instrumental has the band been in the creation of these enterprises?

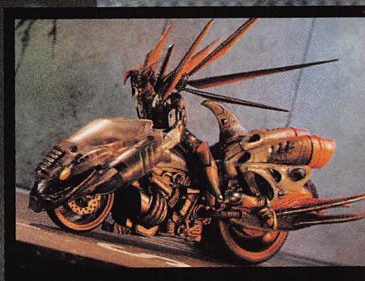
GS: The relationship with McFarlane started when I was considering developing these KISS superhero action figures through Marvel Comics. When the company started going through reorganization and was being bought and sold, I pulled the characters, fired Marvel and called up McFarlane and basically told him he should be in the KISS business. I invited him to one of the shows and by the end of that evening, I had outlined to him an idea basically having to do with an album and then a tour involving how we all want to run away with the circus when it comes to town, except that this circus is sort of a Twilight Zone/Doors of Perception/Aldous Huxley kind of thing. Once you open the door, then go into the tent, all kinds of magical things happen. As soon as McFarlane heard that, he said let's do a comic book and so on. It took a while to negotiate everything, which means that I own all characters and the rights therein, including the original artwork. The comic book has actually just hit its 24th issue and continues to be a powerhouse seller. It has spawned three different versions, a Psycho Circus magazine, which just reprints the content of the comic book, a paperback version and then the action figures. **GR**

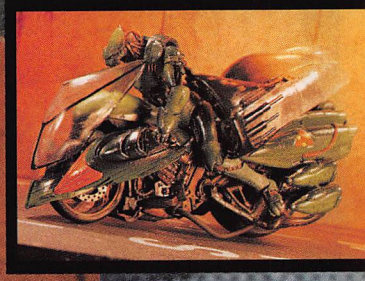
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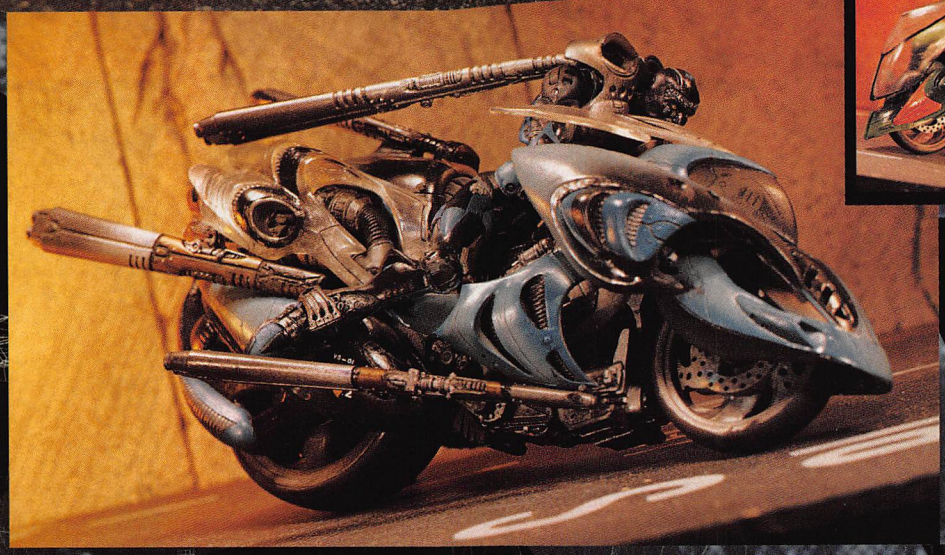
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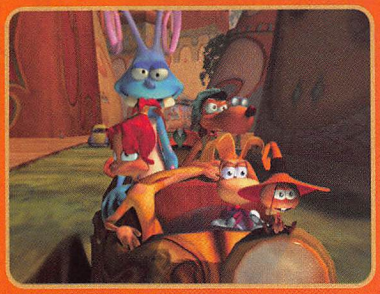
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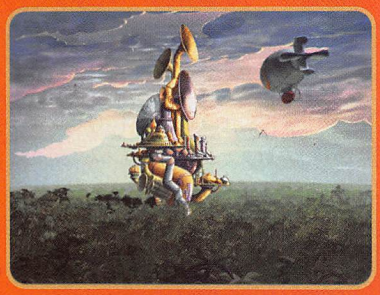
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RAYMAN TV

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It wasn't that many years ago when *ReBoot* captivated TV viewers with its amazing computer-generated visuals. A technical marvel, it opened doors for shows like *Beast Wars* and *Donkey Kong*, but neither looks or is produced and directed quite as well as that first CG classic. With *Rayman the Animated Series* (available now through ubisoft.com on home video) we see the first marked leap since *ReBoot*, with characters, art direction and, most importantly, storylines, that break the mold for computer-generated animation. In fact, *Rayman the Animated Series* looks more like something you'd see at the cinema rather than curled up in front of the TV. What's better is that it's based on a video game (although only Rayman has made it over from the game universe) and delivers a great message to kids while at the same time effusing enough charm and technical wonder to captivate just about anyone in the vicinity. It's hard to take your eyes off of it.

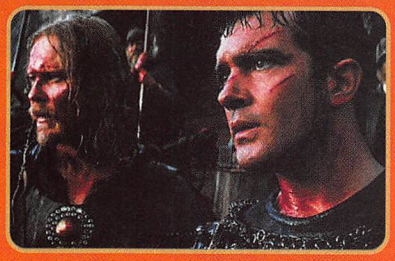
The story follows the exploits of Rayman and his pals after they escape the flying fortress of Rigatoni the evil Ringmaster, where they've been enslaved, forced to perform in his traveling circus. Headed for freedom, Lac Mac, Cookie, Flips, Betina, and Rayman end up in the captivating tree city of Aeropolis, a model of fantastical design if there ever was one. From the cars and suspended monorail to the inhabitants and structures themselves, I can't think of a more original and altogether magical setting.

Things begin to get dicey when the bumbling Inspector Grub, whom Rigatoni's put on the case to steal back his imprisoned performers, begins to close in. As fate would have it, Grub, in a true cartoon coincidence, happens to live directly downstairs from where the group takes up residence, or refuge in this case. And so the stage is set for some big time cat 'n' mouse action. Character designer and art director Alexandra Ancel does a spectacular job, conjuring some truly intriguing character designs while staying true to the now famous and markedly French Ubi look. From the textures, to the lighting, to the big noses and the swirl-laden murals, it is in full effect. The voice acting and direction, too, is first rate, and Ubi has spared no expense in terms of special effects and painstaking animation. And if it's cameos you want, it is cameos you shall have. Keep an eye out for Ed's head and see if you recognize Rigatoni's henchmen from anywhere. -D. Halverson ▸ A-

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THE 13TH WARRIOR

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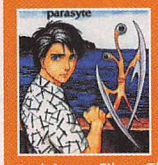


Based on one of Michael Crichton's best reads, *Eaters of the Dead*, *The 13th Warrior* is a down-and-dirty pure adventure/thriller from director John McTiernan (*Die Hard*). It should be noted, though, that McTiernan wasn't happy with Crichton's final cut, so if you don't like it, blame Crichton. It would certainly have been warranted (and welcome) for the DVD to provide a glimpse in to McTiernan's version, although this is sadly not the case. I thought that was what DVD was all about!?

Things get underway quickly as an important emissary (Antonio Banderas) joins a savage band of Norse Warriors, who have taken on the ungodly task of killing a tribe of mysterious creatures, The Wendol, legendary for consuming the living. After a crusty old fortune teller warns them that they will fail unless they take on a 13th Warrior, they reluctantly allow a gentlemanly outsider, Ahmed Ibn Fahdlan (Banderas), to join their barbaric band. Admittedly, more often than not, such fish-out-of-water drivel reeks up the whole theatre, but in this case, in my opinion, it worked. I know, besides an okay write-up in the *Washington Post* and Lisa Schwarzbaum's glimmering ode (resulting in an A-) in *Entertainment Weekly*, *The 13th Warrior* was flogged by most critics. Understandably, there's not a whole lot here to argue over. But one shouldn't enter the theatre for such fare hoping to stumble onto a great script. This picture was filmed outside, in thick forests, dank caves, and among violent seas. It's about tough mother f@#$%s and how they killed some really evil creatures to protect a kingdom. It's mostly a muddy, vile, bravado-filled trek littered with blood and decrepit old fortune tellers and the like, chronicling how Fahdlan comes to join the Viking horde, and ultimately learn their language, skills, and finally enough respect to fight alongside them. It all culminates in a brutal last battle that left me (but few others I've spoken with) riveted. Perhaps I'm over-emotional when it comes to the whole valor thing. The *13th Warrior* reminded me just enough of *Predator* to really strike a chord (that same one I presume) and I loved every minute of it. Perhaps it's the pureness of it all that strikes me: take a bunch of people out in to the middle of nowhere, get really dirty and just roll camera. Every now and then I find refuge in such fodder. Perhaps you will too. The DVD features interactive menus, scene select, theatrical trailers, and a format for 16x9 TVs. -D. Halverson ▸ B

Rated R; strong language and violence; available now

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR



PARASYTE COMING TO THE U.S.: No, it's not an infestation. But the popular Japanese manga comic about an ordinary guy with an alien parasite on his left hand may be on the way courtesy of Jim Henson Pictures and Angry Films. They promise it'll be all live action and CG —no Muppets, ok? • 3...2...1...BOOM!: In other Japanese news, Fine Line Features is bringing *The Ring* stateside, which is a horror film about a cursed videotape: anyone who watches it dies within seven days. So be careful at the video store... • BOND'S MINISTER OF SILLY WALKS?: John Cleese so enjoyed his new role that he's signed on for the next three Bond films to



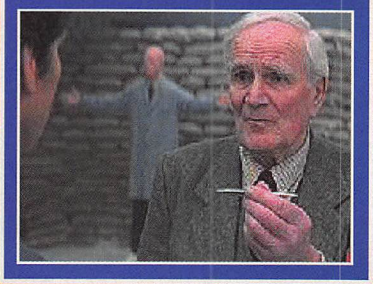
reprise his role as Q's assistant (but, see story below). We're just imagining the extra scenes on the DVD releases...c'mon, John, steal those scenes! • HANKERIN' FOR HARD MEAT: The bonus, non-movie-related item of the month is NASCAR's Dale Earnhardt signing on with foodmaker Famous Fixins to release Dale Earnhardt Beef Jerky, presumably with his face on the label (insert joke here) – but it'll only be in stores in the southeast (aka The South)... • ANAKIN GROWS UP: Word has it that Aussie teen actor and grown-up Jake Lloyd lookalike Jesse Spencer is slated to play teen Anakin. OK, but more importantly: is Natalie Portman coming back?



desmondLLEWELYN

(1914-1999)

Desmond Llewelyn, best known for his portrayal of gadget guru Q in the James Bond films, was killed in a motorcar accident in December. The 85-year-old Llewelyn was returning home from a book signing of his new autobiography in East Sussex when his blue Renault Megane was involved in a head-on collision with another car. Both passengers of the oncoming car survived, and Llewelyn was airlifted to hospital where he died shortly thereafter. The ironically techno-phobic Llewelyn will forever be remembered for his portrayal of Q in 17 of the 19 Bond films, having gotten the role after actor Peter Burton was unable to return to the part for "From Russia with Love".



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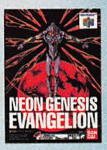

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FALLOUT

Should you wish to put pen to paper (or finger to keyboard), please write to:
Fallout, Gamers' Republic, 32123 Lindero Canyon Road, Suite 215, Westlake Village, CA 91361 USA (editorial@gamersrepublic.com).

Dear GR,

I wanted to send you this letter from my Dreamcast, but hell would freeze over before I could finish it on the virtual keyboard. Sega is not doing very well in my opinion. Their online world offers nothing. I think at the last look there was only one VMU game to download, no saved games, no nothing. Also, to have to enter into an agreement with AT&T to get the keyboard really bites! And what takes the cake is there are no games to play online. Now what happened to Mr. Stolar's quote of instant online gaming for Dreamcast games? The other thing is, a vast majority of the games that are coming out are not very good. Sure, you can port a game over from the PC to Dreamcast, but it's just a ported game. They lack a lot of depth. The one game that stands out is Soul Calibur. It's a knockout, but now I read that Namco is signing on with Sony and that they will not develop for Sega anymore. Bad moon is rising; if Sega does not act quick they will lose out big time. And I am thinking to cut my losses now and get rid of my Dreamcast and wait for the 800 lb Gorilla Sony Ps 2.

Sincerely, Al Liu

Al,

It's true Sega has had over a year to set something up over here, and as of press time the only thing we can report is the Excite.com deal, which is relegated to chat, email, browsing, etc. Within that press release Sega states the following: "Through its 56k modem, which comes with the system, users have exclusive access to the Sega Dreamcast Network, where they can chat, e-mail, browse the Web, and expand their gameplay experience. With Sega Dreamcast's ease of connectivity to the Internet and its huge installed base, the relationship with Sega continues Excite@Home's device strategy and underscores the company's overall corporate vision of 'All Band, All Device, All The Time.' Sega is currently rolling out a four-stage Internet strategy for Sega Dreamcast which includes full real-time, multi-player online gaming, allowing players to challenge people across the street and around the world, while giving them access to web surfing and online content from Excite at the same time."

This would lead one to believe that Sega intends on fulfilling their goals, albeit Rally has come and gone having had the online feature removed and it looks like Virtual On 2 will suffer the same fate. There are rumors that Chu Chu Rocket, Sega's hyper-addictive puzzle game, will be the first to feature online connectivity; however, when, where, and how, we do not know...yet. We talk to Sega quite often and one thing is for sure: they are working on this right now. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if there were an announcement by the time you read this. On the gaming side, we couldn't agree more in regards to most of the PC ports past and on the horizon. Games made for PC, then shoehorned onto the Dreamcast, seldom, if ever, impress (Slave Zero anyone?). Games like Berserk, Maken X, and MDK 2, however, made specifically for the console, look amazing. Sega definitely needs to implement some quality control before this whole PC buzz gets out of hand. Depth is coming! Hold on just a little longer. Launch titles often suffer a lack of depth, but just on the horizon are F1 WGP, Maken X, D2, MDK 2, Draconus, Berserk, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Rayman 2, South Park Rally, Castlevania Resurrection, and Code Veronica, and soon after Sega GT, Ecco, Eternal Arcadia, Shenmue, Furballs, and Sonic Adventure 2 (to name only a few)! You're going to love your Dreamcast in 2000. And then you'll love your PS2, and then your Dolphin etc., etc. Hey, these things are priced to move. Most women spend more than the price of all three on a couple of outfits. It's an easy sell. GR

▸ E.G.G., CONTINUED FROM PAGE 97

must explore each new region to the utmost extent your EGG will allow. Once you've earned the next item or ability by defeating a boss (via a 60-fps arena-style battle), more of the game becomes accessible as you plunge into the deep recesses of a vast mountainous region laced with extensive tombs, corridors and towers. A wonderful universe filled with some of the best puzzle elements I've seen since the legendary Link's Awakening. As you attain the EGG's many armaments and abilities, like the wire arm, ice, fire and plasma elements, waterproofing and vacuum technology, a vast adventure steadily unfolds before you, accompanied by disturbing flashbacks as Leon begins to remember what the world was like, and what effect he had on it, some 5000 years ago. Filled with timing stunts, infinite exploration, brilliant puzzles, and all sorts of payoffs as you achieve higher levels in the game, EGG is the ultimate 128-bit realization of a genre that many thousands will hold dear forever. So the character looks like a walking deep sea diving helmet with legs... I can't recommend this game highly enough. GR

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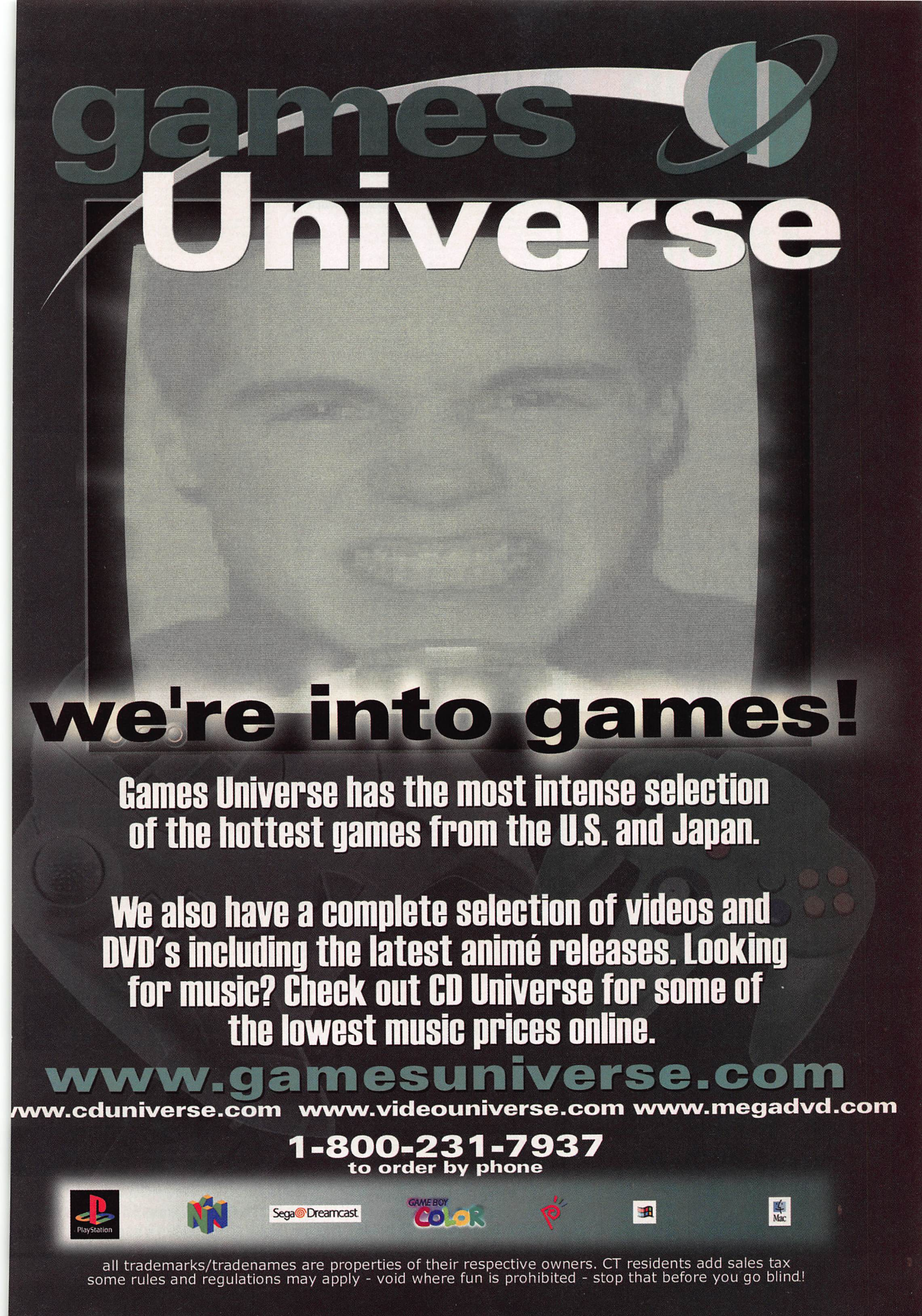
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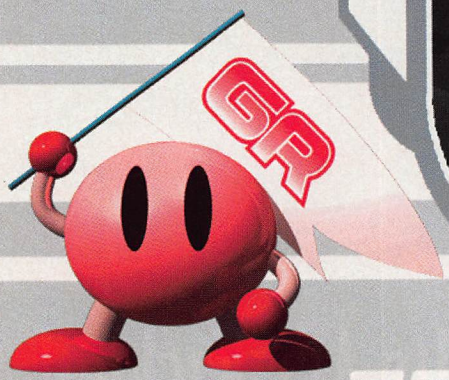
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PLAYSTATION 2



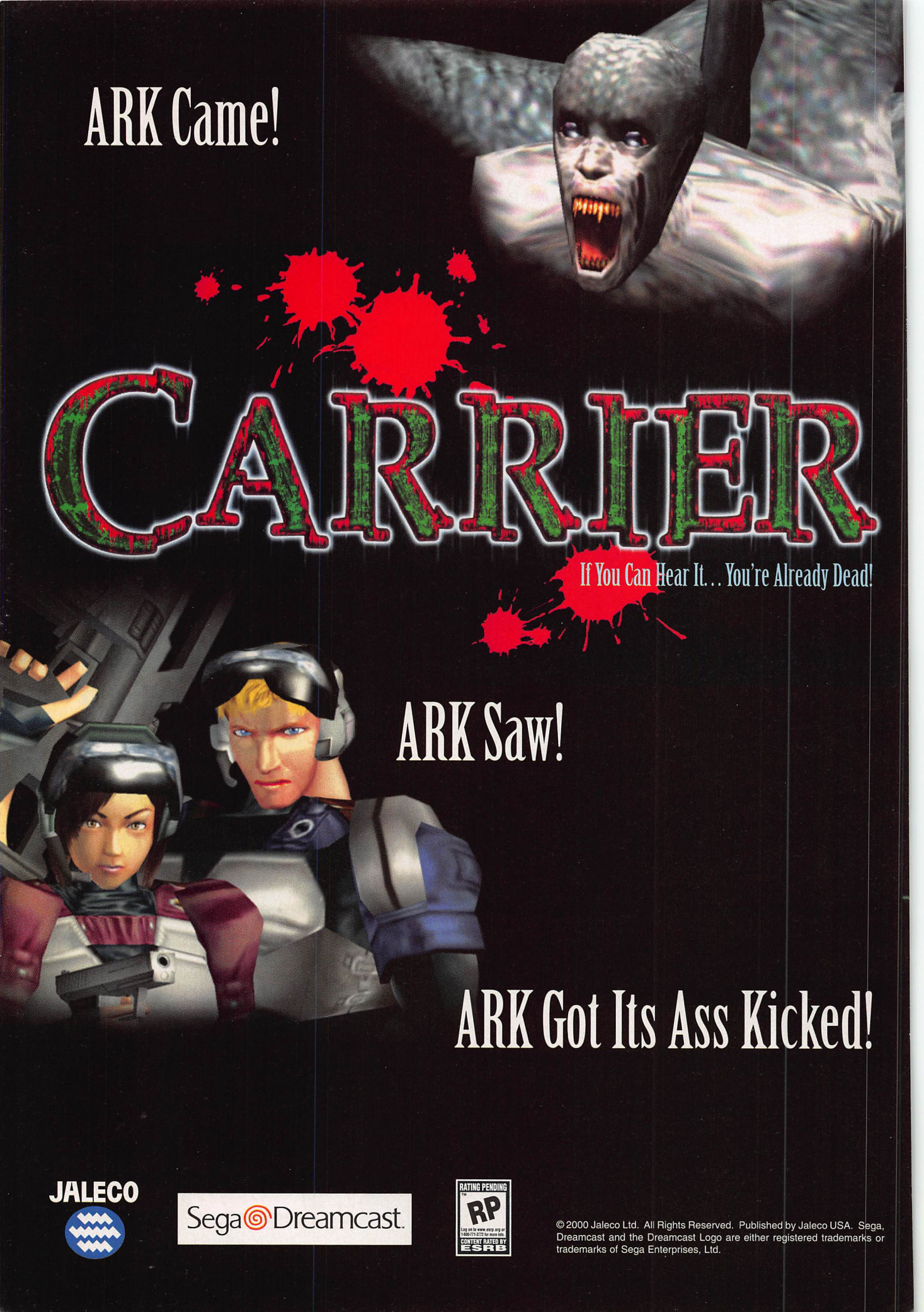


APRIL 2000

The cat gets let out of the bag just a little bit early. February 19-20, Sony will be kicking off their brand-new console at a massive exposition in Tokyo. Naturally, we will be in attendance with the rest of the hordes; after what we've seen of the PlayStation 2 so far, it'd take a crowbar and a shotgun to keep us from our first tastes of Tekken Tag Tournament, Ridge Racer V, Gran Turismo 2000, The Bouncer, Den Sen, and those 128-bit shogi games we've been waiting so long for. Expect the full blowout treatment on everything you can expect from the next generation; we don't think anyone will be disappointed.

ISSUE #23

NUMBER TWENTY-THREE


ARK Came!
CARRIER
If You Can Hear It... You're Already Dead!
ARK Saw!
ARK Got Its Ass Kicked!
JALECO
Sega Dreamcast.
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
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In the 21st Century terrorism reigns supreme in an ever eroding environment. Aboard the Heimdal Aircraft Carrier, survival is all that matters! It's a new world now – a savage, deadly, wasteland where you save whoever is still alive and to hell with the dead.

Vying for control of Earth, the Southern Cross bombs the Heimdal, setting free ARK – a prehistoric organism. When ARK attacks, it implants itself in humans making them hideous, monstrous drones that carry ARK seeds and infect others determined to eliminate ALL of humanity. ARK breeds, mutates, and insanely lusts for the end of human life.

Even if it looks human, you could be screwed 'cause it may be an ARK drone. Who is friend, who is foe?

You are part of an elite unit chosen to isolate and destroy ARK on the Heimdal Aircraft Carrier before it reaches land. You must fearlessly blast your way through a gloomy labyrinth of hallways, flooded control rooms and security levels, battling sinister mutants, while gaining clues and power as you advance. You never know what's lurking in the murky water or around the next corner. Meanwhile, ARK is gaining power after attaching itself to the nuclear core of the Heimdal. Sheer wit and brute force are all that can save you now.









"Carrier is light years ahead of the competition in both game play and graphics."

- Silicon Magazine, July, 1999, Issue 12

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PlayStation

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